Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth

(Al-Ghunya li-Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq)

SHAIKH 'ABD AL-QĀDIR AL-JĪLĀNĪ

TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC BY MUHTAR HOLLAND

Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth

[Al-Ghunya li-Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq]

A COMPLETE RESOURCE ON THE INNER AND OUTER ASPECTS OF ISLAM

VOLUME ONE

SHAIKH ʻABD AL-QĀDIR AL-JĪLĀNĪ

TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC BY MUHTAR HOLLAND

AL-BAZ PUBLISHING, INC.
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"He [Allāh] is the Truth." Qur'ān (22:6)

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Ms. Filippi, who currently resides in Colombia, has lived and worked in Italy, England, Mexico, and the United States.

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Publisher's Preface

The words of Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī can undoubtedly be considered among the most precious treasures of Islām. Indeed, Al-Baz Publishing was founded with the intention of providing fine English translations of his works for the benefit of English-speaking Muslims everywhere, in the spirit of wishing to share the benefit and blessing we have received ourselves at his hand.

I first became interested in Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir (may Allah be well pleased with him) in learning from my own spiritual guide and benefactor Bapak Muhammad Sumohadiwidjojo, founder of the Subud brotherhood (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that Allāh had bestowed on the Shaikh the same opening and contact that Bapak himself received from Allāh, and which he has passed on to us.

Anyone familiar with the *latiban kejiwaan* of Subud will know that to be so honored, as Bapak was by Almighty God, is a rare occurrence in the history of mankind, for such grace is usually bestowed on very few of His creatures. My interest thus being aroused, I sought out the surviving manuscripts from their various repositories around the world, and began the task of having them translated. From the very first reading it was apparent to me that what Bapak had said about the Shaikh was true.

O reader! This endeavor is for you! If you find benefit in the reading of these talks, pray that Allāh bless the Shaikh, and pray for us too, that our offering may find acceptance in His sight!

Ruslan Moore
Al-Baz Publishing, Inc.
August, 1997

Acknowledgments

All praise is due to Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful!

We bear witness that there is no god except Allāh, and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh!

Our Lord, thank You for giving us this wholesome task!

* * *

Grateful thanks to Muhtar Holland for devoting years of his life to translating these works; may Allāh bless him! Grateful thanks to Omar, Ebrahim and Suliman Ghoor, their families and family friends, without whose help the publishing of these volumes might have been delayed by years. Thanks also to the many who have helped make this publication possible, among them the following:

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Translator's Introduction

During a period of well-nigh forty years, between A.H. 521/1127 C.E. and A.H. 561/1166 C.E., countless seekers of the Path of Truth—non-Muslims as well as Muslims—were able to obtain provisions for their journey by attending the sessions held for their benefit by Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (many Allāh be well pleased with him).[1]

Most of the Shaikh's literary works are actually records of his spoken words—words uttered spontaneously, not from a prepared text. To the great good fortune of countless other seekers down to the present day, many of his utterances, including almost two hundred complete discourses, were recorded by attentive listeners. In English translation, one collection has been available for several decades. More recently, in 1992 and 1997, English-language editions of all the known compilations have been published, in four volumes, by Al-Baz Publishing, Inc.

After reading those discourses, we can easily conclude that individuals from all walks of life, and groups of people from all segments of society, were readily accepted in the presence of Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him). There is no evidence to suggest that non-Muslim seekers were treated in what might be called a "proselytizing" fashion. The one emphatic distinction we cannot fail to notice is the distinction between sincerity and hypocrisy. Perhaps for this very reason, the Shaikh proved to be a highly successful missionary. Through the spiritual reality of his being, he represented a living invitation to genuine Islām, and many non-Muslims responded to that invitation (more than five thousand during his lifetime, according to traditional statistics). Maybe one of their number became the friend at whose urging, "because of his excellent appreciation of what is right and proper," the Shaikh agreed to undertake the composition of *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth.*[2]

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[1] For more general background information, including an explanation of the names and titles of Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir, a short account of his life in Baghdād, and a brief survey of his literary works, please refer to the section headed **Concerning the Author**, on p. 447.

It is surely significant that Chapter One is headed: "On *what is required of someone who wishes to enter Islām.*" But does this mean that *Sufficient Provision* is essentially a manual of traditional Islāmic belief and practice, compiled for the benefit of newcomers to the religion? Is it more adequately described by the distinguished scholar[3] who calls it "a treatise on legalistic ethics and theology"? Or was a friend of the translator closer to the mark, when he suggested that it might bear comparison with al-Ghazālī's *Ihyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn [Revival of the Religious Sciences]*, given the range of its contents and its encyclopedic character? Do I hear a voice telling me: "Remember the fable of the blind men trying to describe the elephant!"?

After first advising the reader to study the Author's Prologue, I shall now attempt some kind of answer to these questions, beginning with the significance of that initial Chapter heading. I shall do so by quoting from the concluding passage of the final section of Chapter Three:

> By carrying out the commandment [of Allāh] in the five basic acts of worship, as described in the earlier chapters of this work, a person will come to be a Muslim. Then, by diligently cultivating these good practices [also described], he will come to be one who treads in the footsteps of the Islāmic tradition. He will thereby obtain a certain amount of direct knowledge, though it still remains for him to discover the real experience of direct knowledge of the Creator.
>
> Since this involves the workings of the spiritual core, we postponed discussion of the subject, in order to make it easy for him to take the initial step of entering our religion. But once he has clothed himself outwardly with the light of Islām, we shall say to him: **"Now clothe yourself inwardly with the light of faith!"**

Seekers of the Path of Truth can clearly rest assured that Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) intended this work to shed light on the workings of the spiritual core, as well as on many religiously significant aspects of external conduct.

The emphasis in much of this first volume, for reasons explained by the author himself, is undoubtedly placed on "ritual and ethical" concerns, while the spiritual dimensions loom larger as the work progresses.[4] In Volume Two, for instance, which contains the Shaikh's interpretative commentary *[tafsīr]* on several verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān, a paragraph like the following is by no means untypical:

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[2] See the **Author's Prologue** on pp. 5 and 6 below.

[3] J. S. Trimingham, on p. 41 of his book *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford University Press, 1971).

[4] In his article "'Abd al-Ḳādir" in *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, D. S. Margoliouth initially classifies *al-Ghunya [Sufficient Provision]* as "a ritual and ethical treatise," but then proceeds to indicate the fuller breadth and depth of its scope, including a reference to the author's "mystic interpretations" of the Qur'ān.

> When someone attains to the Loving Friend, he is safely delivered from woe and lamentation. When someone attains to unfiltered vision, he has no further use for hearsay information. When someone attains to the Everlasting Lord, he is safely delivered from grief and sorrow, When someone attains to close companionship, he is safely delivered from lonely separation. When someone attains to noble dignity, he ceases to be affected by emotional upheaval. And when someone attains to the Ultimate Meeting, he is rendered immune to painful suffering.

This work is unmistakably different, in several important respects, from the collections in which the Shaikh's live discourses have been recorded. Similarities abound, however. For instance, in *Sufficient Provision*, certain topics are aptly treated under the heading *Majlis*, the Arabic term meaning "session; discourse; sermon," for it is clear that our author can express himself no less bluntly, as a writer, than he does as a direct speaker. In Volume Three, near the end of the *Majlis* devoted to the month of Ramaḍān, we read:

> The month of Ramaḍān is the month of serenity and purity, the month of fulfillment and fidelity.... So, if it does not have the effect of improving your heart..., what else can exert a positive influence...? You had better pay attention, O miserable wretch.... Come to your senses, wake up from your slumber, shake off your heedless indifference, and take a good hard look at what has befallen you... Take full advantage of the time that is still available.... If you follow this advice, you may yet be one of those who receive the blessings of mercy and compassionate grace.

The final chapters of *Sufficient Provision*, contained within Volume Five, are devoted to the Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]*. In the very last chapter, the subjects discussed are: the sacred struggle against the devil and the lower self, absolute trust in the Lord, goodness of moral character, thankfulness, patience, contentment and truthfulness. As Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) explains: "These seven items form the foundation of the Spiritual Path, and all of them are highly beneficial."

If these few observations and examples have served their purpose, I trust the dear reader will take any slick or sweeping characterization of this massive work with the proverbial pinch of salt. There can be no substitute for personal scrutiny, which may be assisted by the following clarifications, mostly concerning the structure of this Al-Baz edition of the English translation.

Concerning the arrangement of the subject matter
(1) in the original Arabic text;
(2) in the present edition of the English translation:

1. In the original Arabic text of the work entitled *al-Ghunya li-Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq*, primary divisions are marked by the heading *Bāb* [Chapter]. Major subdivisions are headed *Kitāb* [Book] or *Majlis* [Discourse]. Minor subdivisions are indicated by the term *Faṣl* [Subsection]. The division of the entire work into two volumes began with the first printed edition, produced in Cairo in A.H. 1288/1872 C.E., and subsequently reprinted many times. This otherwise arbitrary division was clearly made for reasons of publishing practicality. In the printed edition published by Dār al-Albāb, Damascus, n.d., the work is likewise divided into two parts (192 pp. + 200 pp.), but these have been bound together in one single volume.[5]

2. In this edition of the English translation, entitled *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth*, the words "Chapter," "Book" and "Discourse" have been preserved for the appropriate major headings. Subsections have not been labeled as such, however, since subheadings are adequately distinguished by modern typographic devices. Chapter and Discourse headings, unnumbered in the Arabic version, have been numbered here for ease of reference.

While the Arabic text covers almost four hundred pages, in the edition mentioned above, the English counterpart covers more than seventeen hundred. The difference is quite striking, but easy to explain:

- The Arabic text is densely printed in a small font, with very few punctuation marks. Comparable treatment of the English version would have resulted in extremely poor legibility.
- The contrast is partly due to the nature of the Arabic script. This is generally unvowelled, so that *majlis*, for instance, is written—and printed—as *mjls*. Doubled consonants are not visible as such, there are

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[5] Although it is undated, the Dār al-Albāb edition bears every sign of fairly recent publication, probably in the 1980s.

no capital letters, and the letters of each word are most often closely linked together, in print as well as in handwriting. The name "Muḥammad" is therefore spelled *mḥmd*, and the whole name in Arabic takes up little more space than the initial "M" of the transliterated form.

•Due to significant differences in word formation, grammar and syntax, the typical Arabic sentence is more concise than its English counterpart. Let me offer just one rather striking example: The single Arabic word *kabbir* (simply *kbr* in writing or print) means: "Proclaim the Supreme Greatness of the One Almighty God." It is true that "Say, '*Allāhu Akbar*'" could qualify as a translation of sorts—despite being two-thirds Arabic—but even this shorter expression is still about five times the length of *kbr*.

•In the Damascus edition of *al-Ghunya*, on which the present translation is almost entirely based, the editor has supplied about a dozen footnotes, all of them quite brief. The contrast here is particularly stark, since the translator has provided hundreds of footnotes, many of them quite lengthy.

Enough said, I trust, to explain why *Sufficient Provision* has been published in several volumes. Attention to the subject matter has resulted in this particular five-volume set, following dividing lines apparent in the structure and contents of the work.

Of the points that remain to be clarified, the most important concerns the editorial treatment of Volume One, where certain subsections have been assigned to the Appendices. As for the material presented in Appendix 1, this consists of selections from the Book of Good Manners *[Kitāb al-Ādāb]*, most of them relating quite specifically to physical situations and cultural conditions that are likely to be remote from the everyday experience of our readers. In the case of Appendix 2, the material was actually classed as supplementary by the author himself, when he appended his account of the heretical sects to Chapter Four.

Regarding the Chapter headings, these are unnumbered in the Arabic text, so the numbers One through Seventeen have been supplied for convenience. In the Damascus edition, the important section on Marriage[6] is not designated as a Chapter, but it has been labeled Chapter Two in this translation, since the author subsequently refers to it as a "chapter *[bāb]*."[7]

[6] Vol. 1, pp. 112–50.

[7] Vol. 5, p. 75.

For the sake of clarity and continuity, I have occasionally decided that an explanatory sentence or paragraph, though occurring in the body of the Arabic text, would be more effective as a note at the foot of the page. I have flagged every footnote of this kind with the prefix ***Author's note.*** This device has mostly been applied to the chain of transmitting authorities *[isnād]*, cited by the author to establish the authenticity of a traditional report. Except where otherwise indicated, all other footnotes have been supplied by the translator.

As a way of according explicit recognition to the value of certain reference works, let me list the specific editions that have served as my faithful companions:

- *The Holy Qur'ān*. Translation and Commentary by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. Leicester, England: The Islamic Foundation, 1975.
- *The Glorious Koran*. English translation by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1980.
- Arthur J. Arberry. *The Koran Interpreted*. London: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- Thomas Patrick Hughes. *Dictionary of Islam*. Lahore, Pakistan: The Book House, 1964.
- E.W. Lane. *Arabic-English Lexicon*. 2 vols. Cambridge, England: Islamic Texts Society Trust, 1984.
- *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam (SEI)*. Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1961.

In concluding this introduction, I offer praise and thanks to the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He), and invoke His blessings upon all who seek His Path.

Muhtar Holland

August 27th, 1997
23 Rabī' II, 1418

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

So remember Me,
and I will remember you…
(Qur'ān 2:152)

Author's Prologue

Praise be to Allāh for His gracious favor, and blessings and peace be upon the Prince of His Prophets and upon his family and his friends.

The following are the words of our Supreme Helper *[Ghawthunā'l-A'ẓam]*, the Mainstay of the Arabs and the non-Arabs *[Sanad al-'Arab wa'l-'Ajam]*, the Light of Mankind and the Jinn *[Nūr ath-Thaqalain]*, the Axis of East and West *[Quṭb al-Khāfiqain]*, the Reviver of the Prophetic Example *[Muḥyi's-Sunna]*, Abū Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥasanī al-Ḥusainī al-Jīlānī (may Allāh the Exalted sanctify his innermost being, and may He pour His gracious blessings in abundance upon those who follow his lofty example):

Praise be to Allāh, for every book must begin with the declaration of His praise, as every speech must start with the mention of His name. The people of bliss will take delight in praising Him [hereafter] in the abode of requital and reward. By His name is every sickness healed, and with it every grief and tribulation is removed. Toward Him hands are raised in earnest entreaty and supplication, in hardship and in ease, in good times and in bad. He is Attentive *[Sāmi']* to all voices, with all their various forms of speech in different languages, and He is Responsive *[Mujīb]* to those who feel the need to appeal [to Him].

Praise be to Him, therefore, for all that is best and finest, and thanks be to Him for all the favors He has bestowed, for all the gifts He has granted, and for the evidence and guidance He has clearly shown. May His blessings be upon His chosen friend *[ṣafī]* and Messenger *[Rasūl]*, Muḥammad, through whom He has guided us out of error, and on his family, his companions, his brother Envoys *[Mursalūn]* and the angels brought near *[malā'ika muqarrabūn]*, and may He grant them peace.

Now to address the subject of the present work: One of my friends had been pressing me, urging me in very emphatic terms to compose this book, because of his excellent appreciation of what is right and proper.

Of course, Allāh is the One who protects from harm [*ʿĀṣim*] in words and deeds, the One who has insight [*Muṭṭaliʿ*] into consciences [*ḍamāʾir*] and intentions [*niyyāt*], and the Benefactor [*Munʿim*] who graciously condescends to facilitate whatever He wishes. Refuge with Him (Almighty and Glorious is He) must be sought through cleansing hearts of pretense [*riyāʾ*] and hypocrisy [*nifāq*], and replacing bad deeds with good. He is Forgiving [*Ghāfir*] of sins and mistakes, and Accepting [*Qābil*] of repentance from His servants.

I came to recognize the sincerity of his [my friend's] wish to acquire real knowledge [*maʿrifa*] of modes of behavior consistent with the sacred law [*ādāb sharʿiyya*], namely obligatory religious duties [*farāʾiḍ*], recommended practices [*sunan*] and formal refinements [*haiʾāt*]; real knowledge of the Maker [*Ṣāniʿ*] (Almighty and Glorious is He) through signs [*āyāt*] and indications [*ʿalāmāt*]; then instruction in the Qurʾān and Prophetic utterances [*alfāẓ nabawiyya*], in discourses [*majālis*] we shall mention later; and real knowledge of the morals and ethics of the righteous [*ṣāliḥūn*], which we shall review in the course of the book, so that it may serve as a helper to him in following the path of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), in carrying out His commandments and observing His prohibitions.

I found that he had a sincere intention [*niyya ṣādiqa*], which I experienced within me among the revelations of the Unseen [*futūḥ al-ghaib*], so I gave him a positive response in this matter.

Promptly and eagerly, counting on the reward, hoping for salvation on the Day of Reckoning, I set about the work of compiling this book, with the helpful guidance of the Lord of lords [*Rabb al-arbāb*], the Inspirer of what is right [*Mulhim aṣ-ṣawāb*], and I have given it the title:

Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth
[*Al-Ghunya li-Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq*]

CHAPTER ONE

On what is required of someone who wishes to enter Islām.

Let us begin by stating what is required of anyone who wishes to enter our religion *[dīn]*:

First of all, he must pronounce the two declarations of faith:

There is no god but Allāh.	*Lā ilāha illa'llāh*:
Muḥammad is	*Muḥammadur*
the Messenger of Allāh.	*Rasūlu'llāh*.

He must be completely detached from every religion other than the religion of Islām, and he must firmly believe, with his heart, in the Uniqueness *[waḥdāniyya]* of Allāh (Exalted is He)—as we shall explain it, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills—since Islām is *the* religion in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He).

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

Religion in the sight of Allāh	*inna'd-dīna*
is surrender	*ʿinda'llāhi'l-islām*.
(to His will and guidance). (3:19)	

He has also said (Exalted is He):

If anyone desires anything other	*wa man yabtaghi*
than Islām as a religion, it will	*ghaira 'l-islāmi dīnan*
never be accepted of him. (3:85)	*fa-lan yuqbala min-h*.

If he fulfills this [requirement], he thereby enters into Islām. It is now unlawful to kill him, to deprive his offspring of their liberty, and to seize his property as booty. He is also forgiven any previous shortcomings in relation to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), on account of His words (Exalted is He):

Tell those who disbelieve that,	*qul li'lladhīna kafarū*
if they desist, that which is past	*in yantahū yughfar*
will be forgiven them. (8:38).	*la-hum mā qad salaf*.

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Ruslan Moore
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sufficient to confine oneself to the feeling of conviction *[i'tiqād]*.

2. The 'naming' *[tasmiya]*. This means invoking [the Name of] Allāh (Exalted is He) [by saying: "*Bismi'llāh* (In the Name of Allāh)"] when one is about to use water.

3. Rinsing out the mouth *[maḍmaḍa]*. This means moving water all around inside the mouth, then spitting it out.

4. Snuffing water up the nostrils *[istinshāq]*.

5. Washing the face. Lengthwise, the surface of the face extends from the points where hair grows on the head down to the curve of the jawbones and the chin. Breadthwise, it extends from the tragus of one ear to the tragus of the other.[1]

6. Washing the hands [and the lower arms] up to the elbows.

7. Rubbing the head. The way to do this is by dipping the hands in water, then raising them [wet but] empty, placing them on the front part of the head, drawing them to the back of the head, then returning them to their original position.

8. Washing the feet up to the ankles.

9. Observing the correct sequence *[tartīb]* of all these parts of the body, as enunciated in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> O you who believe! When you get ready for prayer *[salāt]*, wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows, and lightly rub your heads and (wash) your feet up to the ankles. (5:6)

10. Uninterrupted procedure *[muwālāt]*. This means moving on from one part of the body to the next before the first has had time to get dry.

As for those elements that are recommended customs *[sunan]*, they are also ten in number:

1. Washing the palms of the hand before dipping them into the water-container.

2. [Cleaning and polishing the teeth with] the *siwāk*.[2]

3. Exaggeration in the performance of mouth-rinsing *[maḍmaḍa]* and nostril-snuffing *[istinshāq]*,[3] except when one is keeping a fast.

4. Running one's [wet] fingers through the beard. On this point there are two conflicting traditional reports.

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[1] Tragus (from the Greek *tragos*) seems to be the only English term for the fleshy, cartilaginous protrusion at the front of the external ear, partly extending over the opening of the ear. The Arabic term for it is *watad al-udhun* ('peg of the ear').

[2] The *siwāk* is a small stick, softened at the tip by chewing or beating to form a kind of toothbrush.

[3] See nos. 3 and 4 in list of obligatory elements, immediately above.

5. Washing the inside of [the area around] the eyes.
6. Beginning with the right [before the left].
7. Dipping one's hands [again] to take fresh water for the ears.
8. Rubbing the neck.
9. Running the fingers of each hand between the fingers of the other.
10. The second and third washing [of each part in turn].

As for *tayammum*, this is done by patting one's hands on clean earth, which has dust that will adhere to the hand, while intending to ensure the validity of a particular prescribed prayer *[ṣalāt mafrūḍa]*.

While invoking the Name of Allāh with one pat [on the dusty earth], the person performing *tayammum* should leave space between his fingers. Then he should rub his face with the palm-side of his fingers, and the back of each hand with the palm of the other.

As for the major physical purification *[ṭahāra kubrā]*, we shall discuss it in the chapter on toilet manners *[ādāb al-khalā']*, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills.

As for the covering to be worn, this should be a clean article of clothing, sufficient to cover the private parts *['aura]* and the shoulders. It can be made of any kind of clothing material except silk, because prayer is invalid if performed while wearing silk, even if it is clean. The same applies to any garment that has been illegally acquired *[maghṣūb]*.

As for the spot [on which the prayer is to be performed], this must be clear of all impurities. If the impurity *[najāsa]* on it has been dried by the winds or the sun, and the worshipper spreads a clean rug over it and performs his prayer on this rug, his prayer will be valid according to one of two [conflicting] traditional reports. The same applies, according to a report on weak authority *[riwāya ḍa'īfa]*, if the piece of ground has been occupied illegally.

As for facing the *Qibla*, this means facing the actual Ka'ba if one is in Mecca or any place in its vicinity. If one is at a distance from it, however, it means facing in its direction, [as nearly as this can be ascertained] by the exercise of judgment *[ijtihād]* and by making the effort to deduce it from all available evidence, such as that provided by the stars, the sun, the winds, etc.

As for the intention *[niyya]*, its location is the heart *[qalb]*. It means being firmly convinced that Allāh (Exalted is He) has prescribed it as one's duty to perform that specific ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and to carry out His obligatory commandment without seeking to make an impression or acquire a reputation. Then the heart must be present until one has completed the prayer.

According to a tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to [his wife] 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her):

> You get no credit for your ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* unless your heart is present in it.

As for the arrival of the proper time [for the performance of a particular ritual prayer], this must either be known for certain, or—on a day when there is interference from clouds, rough winds and the like—as being most probable.

Then one must give the call to prayer *[adhān]*, saying:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar:*
Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*
I bear witness that	*ashhadu an*
there is no god but Allāh.	*lā ilāha illa'llāh.*[4]
I bear witness that	*ashhadu anna*
Muḥammad is	*Muḥammadan*
the Messenger of Allāh.	*Rasūlu'llāh.*[5]
Come to prayer!	*ḥayya 'ala'ṣ-ṣalāh:*
Come to prayer!	*ḥayya 'ala'ṣ-ṣalāh.*
Come to salvation!	*ḥayya 'ala'l-falāḥ:*
Come to salvation!	*ḥayya 'ala'l-falāḥ.*
Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar:*
Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*
There is no god but Allāh!	*lā ilāha illa'llāh.*

Then one must give the signal to begin *[iqāma]*, saying:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar:*
Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*
I bear witness that	*ashhadu an*
there is no god but Allāh.	*lā ilāha illa'llāh.*
I bear witness that	*ashhadu anna*
Muḥammad is	*Muḥammadan*
the Messenger of Allāh.	*Rasūlu'llāh.*

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[4] The final n-sound in an assimilates to the following l-sound, so that the actual pronunciation is "*al lā ilāha....*"

[5] The final n-sound in *Muḥammadan* assimilates to the following r-sound, so that the actual pronunciation is "*Muḥammadar rasūlu'llāh.*"

Come to prayer!	*ḥayya ʿala'ṣ-ṣalāh.*
Come to salvation!	*ḥayya ʿala'l-falāḥ.*
The prayer is about to begin!	*qad qāmati'ṣ-ṣalāh:*
The prayer is about to begin!	*qad qāmati'ṣ-ṣalāh.*
Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar:*
Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*
There is no god but Allāh!	*lā ilāha illa'llāh.*

⁂

How to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

Once all these preconditions have been properly fulfilled, one should enter the [state of] ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* by saying:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar!*

No other words of glorification *[ta'ẓīm]* may be used instead of this expression.

The *ṣalāt* contains some elements that are basic essentials *[arkān]*, some that are necessities *[wājibāt]*, others that are recommended practices *[masnūnāt]*, and yet others that are formal refinements *[hai'āt]*.

The basic essentials *[arkān]* are fifteen in number, namely:

1. Standing in an upright posture *[qiyām]*.
2. The consecratory affirmation of the supreme greatness of Allāh *[takbīrat al-iḥrām]*.
3. The recitation of the Opening Sūra of the Qur'ān *[al-Fātiḥa]*.
4. Bowing *[rukū']*.
5. Calm composure *[ṭuma'nīna]* in the bowing posture.
6. Straightening up *[i'tidāl]* from the bowing posture.
7. Calm composure in the erect posture resumed after bowing.
8. Prostration *[sujūd]*.
9. Calm composure in the posture of prostration.
10. Sitting between the two acts of prostration.
11. Calm composure in the sitting posture.
12. The final testimony *[tashahhud]*.
13. Adopting the sitting posture in order to pronounce the final testimony.
14. The invocation of blessing on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).
15. The salutation *[taslīm]*.[6]

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[6] The salutation is the expression "*As-salāmu 'alaikum* [Peace be upon you!]" addressed to one's fellow worshippers (and/or the angels) on the right and then on the left.

As for the necessities *[wājibāt]*, these are nine in number:

1. The affirmation of Allāh's supreme greatness *[takbīr]* apart from the consecratory affirmation thereof *[takbīrat al-iḥrām]*.[7]
2. Acknowledging the fact that Allāh hears those who praise Him *[tasmī']*, and then offering praise to Him *[taḥmīd]*, on rising from the bowing posture *[rukū']*.

3,4. The glorification of the Lord *[tasbīḥ]* each time one adopts the postures of bowing *[rukū']* and prostration *[sujūd]*.

5,6. Saying: "*Rabbi'ghfir lī* [My Lord, forgive me]" each time one adopts the sitting posture *[jalsa]* between two acts of prostration.

7. The first testimony *[tashahhud]*.
8. Adopting the sitting posture in order to pronounce the first testimony.
9. Formulating the intention *[niyya]* to leave the [state of] prayer, when giving the salutation *[taslīm]*.

There are fourteen recommended practices *[masnūnāt]*:

1. The introductory invocation *[istiftāḥ]*.
2. Making the plea for refuge *[ta'awwudh]*.
3. Reciting: "*Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm* [In the Name of Allāh, All-Merciful and Compassionate]" (before reciting the Qur'ān).
4. Saying "*Āmīn*" (after reciting *al-Fātiḥa*).[8]
5. Reciting a Sūra [chapter of the Qur'ān] (after *al-Fātiḥa*).
6. Saying: "*Mil'u's-samāwāti wa'l-arḍ* [as much as the heavens and the earth contain]" after offering praise to the Lord *[taḥmīd]*.[9]
7. Additions to the single glorification of the Lord *[tasbīḥa]* in the postures of bowing *[rukū']* and prostration *[sujūd]*.[10]
8. Saying: "*Rabbi'ghfir lī* [My Lord, forgive me!]"
9. Prostration on the nose *[sujūd 'ala'l-anf]* (according to one of two traditional reports).
10. Sitting to rest *[jalsat al-istirāḥa]* after performing the two acts of prostration.

[7] See no. 2 in list of basic essentials *[arkān]*, p. 13 above.

[8] See no. 3 in list of basic essentials *[arkān]*, p. 13 above.

[9] See no. 2 in the list of necessities *[wājibāt]*, above.

[10] See nos. 3 and 4 in the list of necessities *[wājibāt]*, above.

11. Seeking refuge [*ta‘awwudh*] from four things, by saying:

I seek refuge with Allāh from the torment of Hell,	*a‘ūdhu bi'llāhi* *min ‘adhābi jahannam:*
and from the torment of the grave,	*wa min* *‘adhābi'l-qabr:*
and from the mischief of the False Messiah,	*wa min fitnati'l-* *masīḥi'd-dajjāl:*
and from the mischief of life and death.	*wa min fitnati'l-* *maḥyā wa'l-mamāt.*

12. Making supplication [*du‘ā’*], using the expressions handed down in the traditions [*akhbār*], after one has invoked blessing on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in the final testimony [*tashahhud*].

13. The expressions of devotion [*qunūt*] in the supererogatory night-prayer [*witr*].

14. The second salutation [*taslīma*] (according to a weakly authenticated traditional report [*riwāya ḍa‘īfa*]).

The formal refinements [*hai’āt*] are twenty-five in number:

1-3. Raising the hands at the outset, as well as when moving into the bowing posture [*rukū‘*], and when rising from the latter.

This means that the hands are raised close to the shoulders, the thumbs are held beside the earlobes, and the tips of the fingers next to the upper parts of the ears. Then the hands are lowered again.

4. Placing the right hand over the left above the navel.

5. Fixing one's gaze on the place of prostration.

6. Reciting in an audible voice [*jahran*].

7. Saying "Āmīn" in an audible voice.

8,9. Reciting and saying "Āmīn" under one's breath.

10. Placing the hands on the knees in the bowing posture [*rukū‘*].

11,12. Stretching the back straight—and holding the upper arms clear of the sides—while adopting the bowing posture.

13,14. Setting the knee down first, then the hand, when making the prostration [*sujūd*].

15,16. Also in the prostration: Keeping the stomach clear of the thighs, and keeping the thighs clear of the shanks [legs below the knees].

17. Keeping the knees apart during the prostration.

18. Also during the prostration: Placing the hands level with the shoulders.

19,20. Spreading the legs under one *[iftirāsh]* while in the sitting posture *[julūs]* between the two acts of prostration and during the first testimony *[tashahhud]*.

21. Resting on the thighs *[tawarruk]* during the second testimony.

22-24. Placing the clenched right hand on the right thigh, pointing with the index finger, and holding the other fingers so that they form a circle with the thumb in the middle.

25. Placing the left hand, spread out flat, on the left thigh.

If one fails to satisfy any of the preconditions we mentioned at the beginning, without an acceptable excuse, the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* cannot be performed.

If one omits a basic essential *[rukn]*, whether on purpose or through lack of attention, the *ṣalāt* will be rendered invalid.

If one omits a necessary element *[wājib]* because of absent-mindedness, validity can be restored by performing the prostration of absentmindedness *[sujūd as-sahw]*, but if the omission is deliberate, the *ṣalāt* will be null and void.

If one omits a recommended practice *[sunna]* or a formal refinement, the *ṣalāt* is not rendered invalid, nor is an extra prostration required.

◆

The Book of the Alms-due
[Kitāb az-Zakāt]

To be subject to paying the alms-due, one must own a certain minimum amount of property *[māl zakawī]*.

In specific terms, one must possess twenty *mithqāl* of gold;[11] or two hundred dirhams of silver coin; or the equivalent value in mercantile commodities; or five camels; or thirty head of cattle; or forty *ghanam* [sheep and/or goats], which must have been out to pasture for one whole year.

None of this applies, however, in the case of a slave *['abd]* or a *mukātab*,[12] since neither of these is under obligation to pay the alms-due *[zakāt]*.

[In cases where the *zakāt* is payable], the amount to be deducted from gold and silver is one quarter of one tenth. Thus from twenty dīnārs [gold coins] the deduction is one half of one dīnār, since one tenth is equal to two dīnārs, and one quarter of this amount is one half of one dīnār. From two hundred dirhams [silver coins] the deduction will be five dirhams, since one tenth is equal to twenty, and one quarter of this amount is five.

On five camels *[ibil]*, the alms-due is one *shāt* [sheep or goat], which may be either a sheep termed *jadha'*, which has reached the age of six months, or a goat termed *thaniyy*, which has completed one year of its life. On ten camels, two sheep or goats are due; on fifteen, three sheep or goats; on twenty, four sheep or goats. On twenty-five camels, the *zakāt* is a female camel termed *bint makhāḍ*, which has completed one year of life and entered the second, or, if none of these is available, a male camel termed *ibn labūn*, which has completed two years of life and entered the third. On thirty-six camels, it is a female termed *bint labūn*, of the same age as the *ibn labūn*. On forty-six, it is a female camel termed *ḥiqqa*, which has completed three years of life. On sixty-one, it is a female camel termed *jadha'a makhāḍ*, which means one that has completed its fourth year. On seventy-six, it is two *bint labūn* she-camels. On ninety-one and up to one hundred and twenty, it is two *ḥiqqa* she-camels. When the number of camels in a person's possession exceeds one hundred and twenty, the alms-due is one *bint labūn* for every forty, and one *ḥiqqa* for every fifty.

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[11] One *mithqāl* is equal to one and a half drams. (As an apothecaries' weight, the dram is a unit equal to one eighth of an ounce; as an avoirdupois weight, it is a unit equal to one sixteenth of an ounce.)

[12] A *mukātab* is a slave who has made a written contract with his master, stipulating that the slave will be granted his freedom on the payment of a certain sum.

As for cattle *[baqar]*, the *zakāt* due on thirty is one male *tabī'* or female *tabī'a*, which is the term for a one-year-old calf. On forty, it is one *musinna*, meaning a calf that is two years old. On sixty, it is two *tabī'* calves. When the number reaches seventy, one *tabī'* and one *musinna* are due. Further calculation follows this rule, so that one *tabī'* is due on every thirty, and one *musinna* on every forty.

As for sheep and goats *[ghanam]*, the *zakāt* due on every forty is one sheep or goat *[shāt]*, until the number reaches one hundred and twenty. Then for one hundred and twenty-one and up to two hundred, it is two sheep or goats; for two hundred and one and up to three hundred, it is three sheep or goats; for numbers above this, it is one sheep or goat for every hundred.

The revenue from all these sources must be given to the eight classes of beneficiaries mentioned in the Qur'ān:

1. The paupers *[fuqarā']*, meaning those who do not possess enough to meet their needs.
2. The indigent *[masākīn]*, meaning those who have almost everything they need, but are not completely provided for.
3. The agents responsible for collecting the *zakāt* and those responsible for holding the *zakāt* in their safekeeping until they hand it over to the leader of the community *[imām]*.
4. Those whose hearts are to be reconciled *[al-mu'allafa qulūbuhum]*, namely a group of unbelievers who are considered likely to accept Islām if goods are bestowed upon them, or who may be dissuaded thereby from doing harm to the Muslims.
5. Slaves *[riqāb]*, meaning the *mukātabūn* [plural of *mukātab*, explained in note [12] above]. According to one traditional report

[riwāya], it is also permissible to use one's *zakāt* to purchase and then emancipate a wholly-owned slave *[raqaba]*.

6. Debtors, meaning those who are burdened by debts which they are incapable of discharging.
7. [People engaged in fighting] in the cause of Allāh *[fī sabīli'llāh]*. These are the holy-warriors *[ghuzāt]* who receive no remuneration from the treasury of the Imām or other public authorities *[salāṭīn]*. [They are entitled to receive *zakāt*] even if they are rich.
8. The 'son of the road' *[ibn as-sabīl]*, meaning the traveler who is far from home, as opposed to one who is initiating a journey from his own town.

While a person must pay the *zakāt* for which he is liable as an obligatory religious duty *[farḍ]*, he is also recommended to make voluntary charitable donations *[ṣadaqat at-taṭawwuʿ]* at all other times, by night and by day, be it little or much, especially in the blessed months *[ashhur mubāraka]*, like the month of Rajab, Shaʿbān and the month of Ramaḍān, on the days of festival *[ʿīd]* and ʿĀshūrā',[13] and also in times of drought and scarcity, for the sake of securing physical health and the welfare of his property and his family, swift success in this world and abundant reward in the hereafter.

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[13] 'Āshūrā' is the 10th day of the month of Muḥarram.

On the Fast-breaking Alms-due
[Zakāt al-Fiṭr].

Payment of the fast-breaking alms *[zakāt al-fiṭr]* becomes due, provided a person has more than the bare necessities of life for himself and his dependants, on the day of the [post-Ramaḍān] celebration *['Īd]* and the night thereof.

It is due from the householder himself, and also on behalf of his wife, his slave(s), his child(ren), his mother, his father, his brothers and sisters, his uncles and aunts and his cousins, in order of priority depending on the degree of kinship, and on the condition that they be persons whom he is legally bound to provide for and support.

The amount of the *zakāt al-fiṭr* is one *ṣā'*,[14] weighing four *raṭl*[15] in 'Irāq, of dates or raisins, or of wheat or barley (or the flour or paste of either of these), or, according to the sound legal doctrine *[madhhab]*, a similar quantity of cottage cheese *[aqiṭ]*. If none of these types of food are available, the *zakāt al-fiṭr* may be given in the form of whatever grains constitute the staple diet of the country concerned, such as rice, corn, millet and so on.

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[14] The *ṣā'* is a measure of volume, of varying magnitude; approximately equal to one gallon in 'Irāq.

[15] The *raṭl* or *riṭl* is a measure of weight, varying from country to country; approximately equal to one pound in 'Irāq.

The Book of Fasting
[Kitāb aṣ-Ṣiyām]

When the month of Ramaḍān comes around, it is obligatory for the Muslim to fast, because of His words (Exalted is He):

> So every one of you who is present (at home) during the month (of Ramaḍān) should spend it in fasting (2:185).

[Before starting to keep the fast] one must establish the fact that the month has begun. This may be ascertained either by personal observation of the new moon *[hilāl]*, or by the testimony of one male witness with a reputation for honest reporting *[ʿadl]*.

Otherwise, [even if there has been no direct sighting of the new moon, Ramaḍān is presumed to have begun] when Shaʿbān has lasted for thirty full days, or if cloudiness or fog should occur during all or part of [what would be reckoned, if the sky were clear, as] the night of the thirtieth of that month.[16]

[Once the advent of Ramaḍān has been established,] one should make the intention to keep the fast on the coming day of the month of Ramaḍān. This intention may be formulated at any time during the night, from the moment when the sun has set until just before the second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]*.[17]

This intention should be renewed each night until the month comes to an end. It is sufficient, according to a traditional report of weak authenticity *[riwāya ḍaʿīfa]*, if one makes the intention on the first night of the month to keep the fast through the whole of the month, but the correct opinion is the one stated first [at the beginning of this paragraph].

When the daybreak comes, the person keeping the fast must abstain throughout the entire period of daylight from eating and drinking and sexual intercourse *[jimāʿ]*; from anything that might reach his stomach from any point whatsoever; from drawing his own or anyone else's blood by cupping *[ḥijāma]*; and from doing anything to stimulate vomiting or the ejaculation of sperm.

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[16] As reckoned in the Islamic calendar, each 'day' (in the sense of 24-hour period) begins at sunset.

[17] The first, or false dawn *[al-fajr al-kādhib]* is the pale cone of light seen in the Eastern sky before the true daybreak. The second, also called the true dawn *[al-fajr as-sādiq]* and the 'pillar of daybreak' *[ʿamūd as-subh]*, begins shortly before sunrise and is described as "the bright gleam of dawn; the dawn that rises and spreads, filling the horizon with its whiteness."

The infraction of any of these rules will render the person's fast invalid. [To correct the situation] he is required to abstain [for the rest of the day on which the infraction occurred] until sunset, then [fast an extra day] to make up *[qaḍāʾ]*. This does not apply, however, if the infraction is a sexual one.

[If someone commits a sexual infraction of the rules of fasting,] he must not only abstain for the rest of the day and fast an extra day later on. He is also required to perform an act of expiation *[kaffāra]*, which means the emancipation *[ʿitq]* of a believing slave *[raqaba muʾmina]*, who must be free from defects that interfere with his ability to work. If the offender cannot find such a slave to emancipate, he must fast for two consecutive months.

If he is incapable of doing this, he must feed sixty indigent people, providing each of them with one *mudd* of food, which amounts to one and a third *raṭl* in ʿIrāq, and will therefore cost one hundred and seventy-three and one-third dirhams [silver coins], or half a *ṣāʿ*.[18] [The food provided should be] dates or barley, or, if he cannot find these, the staple foodstuffs of his country, as we mentioned in connection with *zakāt al-fiṭr*.[19]

If he cannot come up with anything at all, the obligation to perform expiation *[kaffāra]* falls from him, though he must beg forgiveness of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), repent to Him and behave properly during the remainder [of the month of fasting].

During the daylight hours of Ramaḍān, one who is keeping the fast must avoid being alone in private with a young woman, and must refrain from kissing her, even if she is one of those who are [at other times] lawful to him, or is a woman within the prohibited degrees *[dhāt maḥram]*, meaning a close relative *[raḥim]*.

He must also avoid the following:

1. Using the *siwāk*[20] after the sun has passed the zenith.
2. Chewing gum *[ʿilk]*.

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[18] See notes [14] and [15] above.

[19] See p. 20 above.

[20] The *siwāk* is a small stick, softened at the tip by chewing or beating to form a kind of toothbrush.

3. Collecting his saliva [in his mouth] and swallowing it.
4. Tasting food while it is being cooked and so on.
5. Backbiting, slander, telling lies, cursing, and so on.

It is recommended practice *[yustaḥabb]* to break the fast promptly *[taʿjīl al-ifṭār]*, except on a cloudy day, when it is better to delay doing so [in order to be quite sure that the sun has indeed set].

It is also recommended practice to delay the pre-dawn meal *[saḥūr]*, unless one cannot know for sure when the dawn will break.

The preferred custom is to break one's fast on dates or with water, and to offer a supplication at the moment of breaking fast, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> When one of you is keeping the fast, and the time for his evening meal arrives, let him say:

In the Name of Allāh.	*Bismi'llāh.*
O Allāh, for Your sake I have fasted, and on Your sustenance I have broken fast.	*Allāhumma laka* *ṣumt:* *wa ʿalā rizqika* *afṭart:*
Glory be to You and with Your praise!	*subḥānaka* *wa bi-ḥamdik.*
O Allāh, accept from us, for You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.	*Allāhumma taqabbal minnā* *fa-innaka* *Anta's-Samīʿu'l-ʿAlīm.*

◆

The Book of Seclusion
(for Fasting and Prayer)
[Kitāb al-Iʿtikāf]

The practice of seclusion *[iʿtikāf]* is recommended for one who is keeping the fast. It can only be done in a mosque *[masjid]* in which one can perform the ritual prayers in congregation *[jamāʿa]*. Most suitable for the purpose is the large congregational mosque *[jāmiʿ]*, if the days concerned will include a Friday *[jumʿa]*.

While *iʿtikāf* is permissible even without fasting, it should preferably coincide with the fast, because it is then more effective as a means of concentrating the person's attention and helping him to curb his lower self *[nafs]*, as well as more appropriate in relation to the purpose of the exercise, since *iʿtikāf* means confining the self in a particular place, and persevering in something and pursuing it with constant devotion. Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> What are these images to which you are so devoted *[ʿākifūn]*? (21:52)

It is also one of the practices *[sunan]* traditionally ascribed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and his Companions, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once went into seclusion *[iʿtakafa]* during the last ten days of the month of Ramaḍān, and then did so with unfailing regularity until Allāh (Exalted is He) brought his earthly life to completion *[tawaffāhu]*. He urged the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* to practice it, and he said:

> If someone wishes to go into seclusion, let him practice seclusion *[yaʿtakif]* during the last ten [days of Ramaḍān].

While someone is in this state of seclusion, he should keep himself occupied with some activity that will bring him close to Allāh (Exalted is He), such as reading the Qur'ān, *tasbīḥ*,[21] *tahlīl*[22] and contemplation *[tafakkur]*.

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[21] *Tasbīḥ* means repeating the expression "*Subḥāna'llāh* [Glory be to Allāh]!"

[22] *Tahlīl* means repeating "*Lā ilāha illa'llāh* [There is no god but Allāh]."

He must avoid anything that does not concern him, in word, action and work, and should maintain silence except for the invocation [*dhikr*] of Allāh (Exalted is He).

It is permissible for him to give religious instruction [*tadrīs*] and to teach the recitation of the Qur'ān, because the benefit of this extends to others apart from himself. The reward for it is therefore greater than preoccupation with himself exclusively.

It is also permissible for him to go outside of his place of seclusion [*mu‘takaf*] when he really needs to do so, for such purposes as performing the major ritual ablution [*ightisāl*] in order to wash away pollution [*janāba*], for eating and drinking and attending to the normal human need to relieve the bladder and the bowels, as well as when he has reason to fear for himself on account of temptation [*fitna*] or serious illness, and so on.

◆

The Book of the Pilgrimage
[Kitāb al-Ḥajj]

When all the preconditions relating to the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* have been fulfilled as far as a particular individual is concerned, it becomes his duty to perform the Pilgrimage without undue delay. These preconditions are as follows:

1. After his acceptance of Islām, the person must be free *[ḥurr]*, of sound mind *[ʿāqil]* and legally mature *[bāligh]*.
2. He must be capable of acquiring provisions for the journey and the means of transport.[23]
3. He must have access to a route on which there is no hostile force to prevent his passage.
4. He must have the possibility of making the journey, meaning enough time at his disposal for the performance of the Pilgrimage.
5. He must have the physical fitness necessary for riding on the back of the camel.
6. Before he can be considered as having the means to acquire the provisions for the journey and the riding camel for transport, he must first provide adequate support *[nafaqa]* for the maintenance of his dependants until he returns home to them, as well as housing for them to live in.
7. He must settle his debts, if he has any outstanding.
8. He must have enough to meet his needs after his return, in the form of surplus funds, income from real estate *[ʿaqār]*, or merchandise *[biḍāʿa]*.

If he fails to comply with these requirements, by leaving his dependants without adequate support and refusing to settle his debts, yet still goes off on the Pilgrimage, he will be guilty of a sinful offense *[maʾthūm]* and subject to severe disapproval *[maskhūṭ]*, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

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[23] Literally, a female riding camel *[rāḥila]*.

> It is sin enough for a man to neglect those for whom he should be providing support.

Provided he has been innocent of any violation, once he has completed the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* and the Visitation *[ʿUmra]*, he ceases to be subject to this as an obligatory religious duty *[farḍ]*.[24]

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[24] The *ʿUmra* [Visitation, or Lesser Pilgrimage] encompasses many of the ceremonies of the *Ḥajj*. It can be performed at any time except the eighth, ninth and tenth days of the month of Dhu'l-Ḥijja, these being the days of the *Ḥajj* itself.

Practices to be observed at the assembly point *[mīqāt]*.

The assembly point designated by the Sacred Law *[mīqāt sharʿī]* will be one of the following:

For people coming from the East:	Dhāt ʿIrq;
For people coming from the West:	al-Juḥfa;
For people coming from Medina:	Dhu'l-Ḥalīfa;
For people coming from Yaman:	Yalamlam;
For people coming from Najd:	Qarn [al-Manāzil].

On arrival at the assembly point, the pilgrim must attend to the following:

1. He must perform a major ablution *[yaghtasil]* and make himself clean and tidy, or perform *tayammum*[25] if there is no water available.
2. [Having divested himself of all his other clothes,] he must wear one seamless wrapper *[izār]* around his waist, and another seamless piece of cloth *[ridā']* over his shoulder. Both of these must be white and clean.
3. He should freshen himself with perfume, perform two cycles of ritual prayer *[rakʿatain]*, then enter the state of consecration. He must intend the consecration *[iḥrām]* with his heart.
4. He must declare his readiness to serve *[yulabbī]* by performing the *ʿUmra*—the best course if he is a *mutamattiʿ*[26]—or the *Ḥajj* by itself, or the *Ḥajj* and the *ʿUmra* in combination.
5. He is required to pronounce the following words:

O Allāh!	*Allāhumma*
I wish to perform the *ʿUmra*	*innī urīdu'l-ʿUmra:*
(or the *Ḥajj*,	*(awi'l-Ḥajj:*
or both of them together),	*aw iyyāhumā jamīʿan)*

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[25] For the rules of *tayammum* [the use of clean, dusty earth], see p. 10 above.

[26] The *mutamattiʿ* is someone who takes advantage *[yatamattaʿ]* of his presence in Mecca on a Visitation *[ʿUmra]* by performing the *Ḥajj* in the same year.

so make that easy for me	*fa-yassir dhālika lī*
and accept it from me,	*wa taqabbal minnī*
and let my place be wherever	*wa maḥallī*
You would have me stay.	*ḥaithu ḥabastanī.*

6. Then he must declare his readiness to serve *[yulabbī]*, and the proper formula for this declaration *[talbiyya]* is:

Doubly at Your service,	*labbaik*
O Allāh!	*Allāhumma*
Doubly at Your service!	*labbaik.*
No partner have You!	*lā sharīka laka*
Doubly at Your service!	*labbaik.*
Yours is the praise	*inna'l-ḥamda*
and the grace,	*wa'n-niʿmata laka*
and Yours is the kingdom!	*wa'l-mulk:*
No partner have You!	*lā sharīka lak.*

7. He must raise his voice while saying these words. He must say them after entering the state of consecration *[iḥrām]*, then repeat them on the following occasions:

(a) Immediately after [each of] the five daily prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]*;
(b) At the onset of the night and of the day;
(c) When meeting up with groups [of fellow pilgrims];
(d) When climbing an elevated place or going down into a valley.
(e) On hearing someone else uttering the *talbiyya*.
(f) In the mosques *[masājid]* of the Sanctuary *[al-Ḥaram]* and its neighboring sites.

8. When he has finished pronouncing the *talbiyya*, he must invoke blessings *[yuṣallī]* upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and he should also make a prayer of supplication *[yadʿū]* on his own behalf, asking for whatever he would like.

◆

On the forms of expiation required to compensate for various infractions during the Pilgrimage.

Once the pilgrim has entered the state of consecration *[aḥrama]*, he must not cover his head, and he may wear neither stitched cloth nor shoes. If he does so, he is obliged to sacrifice a sheep or goat, unless he cannot find a seamless wrapper *[izār]* and sandals to wear.

He should not apply any kind of perfume to his body or his clothing. If he does so on purpose, he must wash it off and sacrifice a sheep or goat.

He should neither clip his nails nor shave his head. If he clips three nails, or shaves three hairs from his head or his body, it is incumbent upon him to sacrifice a sheep or goat. If the number is less than three, then for each nail clipped or hair shaved [he must provide an offering of] one *mudd* of food.[27]

He may not contract a marriage, whether for himself or as proxy for someone else. It is permissible, however, for him to revoke a divorce *[irtijā']*.

He must not have sexual contact with wife or slave concubine *[ama]*, whether in the vulva *[farj]* or short of the vulva. If he does this, his Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* will be null and void, provided the act has occurred prior to the ritual casting of the pebbles at the Satanic pillar *[Jamrat al-'Aqaba]*.

He should neither masturbate nor [excite himself sexually] by looking repeatedly [at a woman]. If he ejaculates sperm as a result of doing so, it is incumbent on him to make expiation *[kaffāra]*, which in this case requires the sacrifice of a sheep or goat.

He must not kill edible game *[ṣaid]*, nor any creature that is in the process of giving birth, whether it be edible or inedible. He is also forbidden to eat game that has been hunted on his behalf, or which he has pointed out, or to which he has guided [the hunter], or which he has helped to slaughter, for instance by holding it down, or by lending the hunter a knife, and so on.

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[27] The *mudd* is a dry measure equal to two handfuls of grain.

If he is responsible for the killing of game, he must pay the penalty, which is the equivalent sacrifice of grazing livestock *[na'am]*. Thus, if the game animal is an ostrich, he is obliged to sacrifice a fat camel or ox. If it is a wild ass, he must sacrifice a cow. If it is a wild ox or similar species, he must also sacrifice a cow. If it is a gazelle or a fox, he must sacrifice a male goat. If it is a hyena, a ram. If it is a rabbit or a hare, a young she-goat. If it is a jerboa, a female weanling lamb or kid. In the case of a lizard, a young billy goat. In each category, a large animal must be sacrificed for a large one killed in hunting, and a small animal for a small one. If the victims are doves or pigeons, one sheep or goat must be sacrificed for each bird.

If he does not have an equivalent animal to sacrifice, he must offer its value, for the assessment of which he should consult the opinion of two Muslims of honest reputation.

It is permissible for the pilgrim to slaughter and eat domesticated animals *[ḥayawān insī]*.

It is also permissible for him to kill any creature that is capable of causing harm, such as the snake, the scorpion, the savage dog, the lion, the tiger, the wolf, the lynx, the rat, the spotted crow, the kite, falcons and similar birds of prey, the hornet, bedbugs, fleas, ticks, geckoes, flies, and all the vermin of the earth.

He is also allowed to kill ants when they are a nuisance. The same applies to lice and nits, according to one of the two traditional reports *[riwāyatān]* on the subject, but according to the other he is obliged to donate in charity *[yataṣaddaq]* as much as he can afford.

He must not kill the game animals of the Sacred Precinct *[Ḥaram]*. If he does so [at any time], he is subject to the same penalties as those we have mentioned in connection with hunting game while in the state of consecration *[iḥrām]*.

He is also forbidden to cut down or uproot the trees of the Sacred Precinct. The penalty for doing so is one cow in the case of a large tree, and one sheep or goat in the case of a small tree.

The game and the trees of Medina are likewise unlawful to him, but the penalty for either [hunting its game or felling and uprooting its trees] is the forfeiture of whatever clothes he has on him; these become the lawful property of anyone who seizes them.

On the rites of Pilgrimage to be performed by the early arrival.

If there is plenty of time to spare, making it possible for the pilgrim to arrive in Mecca some days before the Day of ʿArafa, the procedure recommended *[mustaḥabb]* in his case is that he should perform a complete ablution *[ghusl kāmil]* and then enter the city from its highest point.

When he reaches the Sacred Mosque *[al-Masjid al-Ḥarām]*, he should enter through the Banī Shaiba Gate. Raising his hands at the sight of the House *[al-Bait]*, he should say:

O Allāh! You are Peace,	*Allāhumma Anta's-Salām:*
and from You comes peace!	*wa minka's-salām.*
Let us live, Our Lord, in peace!	*ḥayyinā Rabbanā bi's-salām.*
O Allāh!	*Allāhumma*
Increase this House in glory,	*zid hādha'l-Baita taʿẓīman*
in nobility and honor,	*wa tashrīfan wa takrīman*
in dignity and reverence!	*wa mahābatan wa birrā.*
And increase those who	*wa zid man*
ennoble it and glorify it	*sharrafahu wa ʿaẓẓamahu*
—among those who make	*mimman ḥajjahu*
Pilgrimage or Visitation to it—	*awi' ʿtamarahu*
in glory and nobility,	*taʿẓīman tashrīfan*
in honor and in dignity.	*wa takrīman wa mahāba.*
And praise be to Allāh	*wa'l-ḥamdu li'llāhi*
in great abundance,	*kathīran*
as He is Worthy of it	*kamā Huwa ahluhu*
and as it is befitting	*wa kamā yanbaghī*
the noble goodness	*li-karami*
of His Countenance	*Wajhihi*
and the splendor of His Majesty.	*wa ʿizzi Jalālih.*
Praise be to Allāh, who has	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi'lladhī*
brought me to His House,	*ballaghanī Baitahu*
and has considered me	*wa raʾānī*
worthy thereof!	*li-dhālika ahlā.*

And praise be to Allāh	*wa'l-ḥamdu li'llāhi*
in every circumstance!	*ʿalā kulli ḥāl.*
O Allāh, You have invited (us)	*Allāhumma innaka*
to make the Pilgrimage	*daʿawta*
to Your House,	*ilā ḥajji Baitika*
and so we have come	*wa qad ji'nāka*
to You now.	*li-dhālik.*
O Allāh, accept (this) from me,	*Allāhumma taqabbal minnī*
and pardon me,	*wa' ʿfu ʿannī*
and improve my	*wa aṣliḥ lī*
condition totally!	*sha'nī kullah.*
There is no god but You!	*lā ilāha illā Anta.*

The pilgrim should raise his voice while uttering this. Then he should circumambulate [the Kaʿba] to mark his arrival, wearing the *ridā'* [wrapper for the upper part of his body] in such a way that his right shoulder is exposed and his left shoulder is covered.

When he approaches the Black Stone *[al-Ḥajar al-Aswad]*, he should touch *[yastalim]* it with his hand. He should also kiss it if he can, but if he cannot do so, he may touch it and then kiss his hand. If the crowd is so dense that he cannot get within reach, he should point his hand toward it. He should say:

In the Name of Allāh,	*Bismi'llāhi*
and Allāh is Supremely Great!	*wa'llāhu Akbar.*
O Allāh!	*Allāhumma*
With faith in You and belief	*īmānan bika wa taṣdīqan*
in You and in Your Book,	*bika wa bi-kitābika*
and in fulfillment	*wa wafā'an*
of Your covenant,	*bi-ʿahdika*
and following the example	*wa'ttibāʿan li-sunnati*
of Your Prophet Muḥammad	*nabiyyika Muḥammadin*
(Allāh bless him	*(ṣalla'llāhu ʿalaihi*
and give him peace!)	*wa sallam).*

He should move to his right as he circumambulates, so that he comes back around to the door of the House, and proceeds toward the stone supporting the spout from the roof, moving rapidly, which means at a very brisk pace *[saʿy shadīd]* with steps close together, until he reaches—but does not kiss—the Yamānī corner. When he reaches the Black Stone, this will count as one circuit.

He must then circumambulate a second and a third time in the same manner, saying all the while:

O Allāh, let it be	*Allāhumma 'j'alhu*
a Pilgrimage accepted,	*ḥajjan mabrūran*
and an effort acknowledged,	*wa sa'yan mashkūran*
and a sin forgiven.	*wa dhanban maghfūrā.*

Then he should slacken his pace, still keeping his steps close together, and walk the remaining four circuits at his leisure, saying as he does so:

O my Lord, forgive	*Rabbi'ghfir*
and have mercy.	*wa'rḥam.*

And pardon what You know,	*wa' 'fu 'ammā ta'lam:*
for You are the Most Mighty,	*wa Anta'l-A'azzu'l-*
the Most Generous!	*Akram.*

O Allāh!	*Allāhumma*
Our Lord! Grant us good	*Rabbanā ātinā*
in this world	*fi'd-dunyā ḥasanatan*
and good in the hereafter,	*wa fi'l-ākhirati ḥasanatan*
and save us	*wa qinā*
from the torment of the Fire!	*'adhāba'n-nār.*

He may also pray for whatever he wishes among the good things of this world and the hereafter.

The pilgrim must perform these rites of circumambulation with conscious intention *[nāwiyan]*, in a state of purity unspoiled and undefiled, and keeping his private parts *['aura]* covered, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> The circumambulation of the House *[ṭawāf al-Bait]* is also a ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, although it is one in which Allāh (Exalted is He) has permitted you to speak.

When the pilgrim has finished doing all this, he should perform two brief cycles of ritual prayer *[rak'atain khafīfatain]* behind the Station of Abraham *[Maqām Ibrāhīm]*, the Intimate Friend of the All-Merciful *[Khalīl ar-Raḥmān]* (peace be upon him).

In the first cycle, after the *Fātiḥa*, he should recite the Sūra that begins with the words: "Say, O you unbelievers *[qul yā ayyuha'l-kāfirūn]*,"[28] and in the second cycle, the Sūra beginning with "Say: 'He is Allāh, the One!' *[qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad]*."[29] Then he should return to the Black Stone *[al-Ḥajar al-Aswad]* and kiss it.

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[28] The 109th Sūra of the Qur'ān, entitled *al-Kāfirūn* [The Unbelievers].

[29] The 112th Sūra of the Qur'ān, entitled *al-Ikhlāṣ* [Sincere Devotion].

Next, the pilgrim should go out [of the Sacred Mosque] to [the small hill of] aṣ-Ṣafā, by way of the gate of that name. He should climb the hill to a point from which he can get a view of the Kaʿba, then proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh *[yukabbir]* [30] three times and say:

Praise be to Allāh for	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*
the guidance He has given us!	*ʿalā mā hadānā.*
There is no god but Allāh Alone.	*lā ilāha illa'llāhu Waḥdah.*
No partner has He.	*lā sharīka lah.*
He has kept His promise,	*ṣadaqa waʿdah:*
and He has aided His servant,	*wa naṣara ʿabdah:*
and He has put the hosts	*wa hazama'l-aḥzāba*
to flight by Himself Alone.	*Waḥdah.*
There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa'llāh:*
and we worship none but Him,	*wa lā naʿbudu illā iyyāh:*
devoting the religion	*mukhliṣīna*
to Him sincerely,	*lahu'd-dīn:*
even though	*wa law*
the unbelievers do not like it.	*kariha'l-kāfirūn.*

He should then go down [the hill of aṣ-Ṣafā], utter the *talbiyya*[31] and offer his supplication a second and a third time. He should go on walking down, until there is a distance of six cubits *[adhruʿ]* between himself and the green mile-post erected beside the Mosque. Then he should walk at a more rapid pace until he reaches the two green mile-posts. From this point he should slacken his pace until he reaches [the small hill of] al-Marwa, up which he must climb in order to do what he did on aṣ-Ṣafā.

He will then descend [from al-Marwa], walking at an easy pace over the appropriate stretch, and almost running where a brisk pace *[saʿy]* is called for, until he arrives at aṣ-Ṣafā. He must then repeat the whole procedure.

A total of seven laps must be covered, starting out from aṣ-Ṣafā and ending up at al-Marwa. While performing this rite, the pilgrim must be

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[30] By saying: "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]"

[31] The words of the *talbiyya* are:

Doubly at Your service,	*labbaik*
O Allāh!	*Allāhumma*
Doubly at Your service!	*labbaik.*
No partner have You!	*lā sharīka laka*
Doubly at Your service!	*labbaik.*
Yours is the praise	*inna'l-ḥamda*
and the grace,	*wa'n-niʿmata laka*
and Yours is the kingdom!	*wa'l-mulk.*
No partner have You!	*lā sharīka lak.*

in a state of purity, as we mentioned in connection with the circumambulation of the House *[ṭawāf al-Bait]*.

Once he has finished doing all this, he may shave [his head] or cut [his hair] short, if he is a *mutamatti'*[32] and has not brought a sacrificial animal with him, and he may now act in every way like a person who is *ḥalāl* [not in the state of consecration].

On the Day of *Tarwiyya*[33] which is the eighth of Dhu'l-Ḥijja, he [the *mutamatti'*] must enter the state of consecration *[iḥrām]*, as from Mecca, in order to perform the [annual] Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*.

The pilgrim must now go to Minā, where he will perform the ritual prayers prescribed for noon *[ẓuhr]*, afternoon *['aṣr]*, sunset *[maghrib]* and late evening *['ishā']*. He must spend the night there, then perform the dawn prayer *[ṣubḥ]*.

When the sun has risen, he should join the throng of people and wend his way to the Place of Standing *[mauqif]* at 'Arafa. Then, when the sun has passed its peak, he should draw close to the Imām and pay attention to his words as he delivers a sermon *[khuṭba]*, instructing the people concerning what they are required to do.

[The Imām will explain] about the rite of Standing *[wuqūf]* and the place and time for it, about the move away from 'Arafāt, the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* at Muzdalifa and how the night is to be spent there, as well as other observances, such as the stoning of the pillars *[ramy al-jimār]*, the slaughtering of sacrificial animals *[naḥr]*, the shaving of the head and the circumambulation *[ṭawāf]* of the House.

[After the sermon] the pilgrim should perform the noon *[ẓuhr]* and afternoon *['aṣr]* prayers in the company of the Imām, combining the two [without an interval] but marking the beginning of each prayer with a separate *iqāma*.[34]

Then he should proceed toward the Mount of Mercy *[Jabal ar-Raḥma]* and the rock formations in close proximity to the Imām.

As he stands there, facing the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba], he may use his own judgment *[yajtahid]* in formulating supplications *[du'ā']* and

[32] See note [26] above.

[33] In this context, the word *tarwiyya* has two possible meanings: (1) Providing water; (2) Deliberation, reflection, pondering.

According to some Islamic authorities, the eighth of Dhu'l-Ḥijja is the day on which the pilgrims provide themselves with water for the visit to Minā. According to others, however, it is called the Day of *Tarwiyya* to commemorate the fact that this was the day on which Abraham (peace be upon him) pondered over the sacrifice he had been commanded to make of his son.

[34] See pp. 11 and 12 above.

expressions of praise *[thanā']* for Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), but the greater part of his invocation *[dhikr]* should consist of the following words:

There is no god but Allāh Alone.	*lā ilāha illa'llāhu Waḥdah.*
No partner has He.	*lā sharīka lah.*
To Him belongs the kingdom	*lahu'l-mulku*
and to Him belongs the praise.	*wa lahu'l-ḥamd.*
He brings to life and	*yuḥyī*
causes death, while He is	*wa yumītu wa Huwa*
Ever-Living and never dies.	*Ḥayyun lā yamūt.*
All goodness is in His Hand,	*bi-yadihi'l-khairu*
and He is Powerful	*wa Huwa*
over all things.	*'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*
O Allāh, put a light	*Allāhumma'j'al*
in my heart,	*fī qalbī nūran*
and a light in my eyes,	*wa fī baṣarī nūran*
and a light in my hearing,	*wa fī sam'ī nūrā*
and make my task easy for me!	*wa yassir lī amrī.*

If the pilgrim misses the opportunity to perform the rite of Standing *[wuqūf]* in the company of the Imām during the time of daylight, he must catch up with it after the Imām has left the Place of Standing *[mawqif]*, before the appearance of the second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]*[35] of the Night of Sacrifice *[lailat an-naḥr]*.[36]

As long as he catches up with it within this time-frame, the pilgrim has succeeded in making the obligatory stop at 'Arafa *[waqfa]*, but if he fails to do so, he has missed the whole [of that year's] Pilgrimage.

If he moves away [from 'Arafa] to the Muzdalifa road in company with the Imām, he should do so unhurriedly, in a calm and dignified manner.

Then, once he has reached Muzdalifa, he should stay there with the Imām to perform the sunset *[maghrib]* and late evening *['ishā']* prayers in congregation *[jamā'a]*. If he arrives too late to pray with the Imām, he must perform the prayers by himself. He should then make camp and spend the night there.

From Muzdalifa, or from wherever [in the vicinity] he can easily gather them, the pilgrim should collect the pebbles to be thrown at the [satanic] pillars. Seventy is the number of pebbles required, and in size they should be bigger than chick-peas *[ḥimmaṣ]* and smaller than hazelnuts *[bunduq]*. The recommended practice is to wash them clean.

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[35] See note [17] above.

[36] Since the day in the Islamic calendar begins at sunset, the Night of Sacrifice is actually the first part of the Day of Sacrifice.

Then he must perform the dawn prayer *[fajr]*, either when daybreak has arrived *[aṣbaḥa]* or, at his own discretion, at the early time called *ghalas*.[37]

The pilgrim should then make his way to the Sacred Monument *[al-Ma'shar al-Ḥarām]*[38] and station himself beside it, repeatedly praising and extolling the Lord, affirming that Allāh Alone is worthy of worship *[tahlīl]*[39] and that He is Supremely Great *[takbīr]*[40] and making supplication *[du'ā']*.

His supplication should preferably be expressed in these words:

O Allāh, as You have	*Allāhumma kamā*
caused us to stand here,	*awqaftanā fīhi*
and have let us see	*wa araitanā iyyāh:*
(this sacred monument),	
help us to practice	*fa-waffiqnā*
remembrance of You	*li-dhikrika*
according to the guidance	*kamā*
You have given us.	*hadaitanā*.
And forgive us	*wa'ghfir lanā*
and have mercy on us,	*wa'rḥamnā*
as You have promised us	*kamā wa'adtanā*
in Your own words	*bi-qawlika*
(and Your words are the Truth!):	*(wa qawluka'l-ḥaqq)*:
"And when you press on	*fa-idhā afaḍtum*
in the multitude from 'Arafāt....	*min 'Arafātin*....
Allāh is indeed Forgiving,	*inna'llāha Ghafūrun*
Merciful."[41]	*Raḥīm*.

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[37] The text reads: *wa yajtahidu an yughallisa bihā*. The expression *ghallasa bi's-salāt* means "To perform the [dawn] prayer in the time called *ghalas*." The *ghalas* is defined (according to E.W. Lane's *Arabic-English Lexicon*) as "the darkness of the last part of the night, when it becomes mixed with the light of dawn; or, the beginning of the dawn, until it spreads in the tracts of the horizon."

[38] The Sacred Monument *[al-Ma'shar al-Ḥarām]* marks the spot in Muzdalifa (about midway between 'Arafāt and Minā) where the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) offered up a long prayer of supplication.

[39] See note [22] above.

[40] See note [30] above.

[41] Assuming a knowledge of the Qur'ān on the part of the reader, the author writes, "up to His words (Exalted is He)," between the first phrase of the quotation and the final sentence. The whole Qur'ānic passage (in translation) reads as follows:

> But, when you press on in the multitude from 'Arafāt, remember Allāh by the sacred monument. Remember Him as He has guided you aright, even though, before this, you were among those who have gone astray. Then pass on quickly from the place from which the multitude is quick to pass on, and ask forgiveness of Allāh. Allāh is indeed Forgiving, Merciful. (2:198,199)

As soon as the light of day is shining brightly and has acquired a yellow tinge, the pilgrim should set off toward Minā, moving quickly through the Valley of Maḥsir. When he reaches the Valley of Minā, he should throw seven pebbles at the pillar called *Jamrat al-'Aqaba*,[42] crying "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]" in the wake of each pebble, and raising his hands high enough to let the white of his armpits show, just as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is said to have cast his pebbles.

The pilgrim should stop proclaiming his *talbiyya* [43] when he is about to throw the first of his pebbles.

[On the tenth of Dhu'l-Ḥijja, the Day of Sacrifice] this rite of casting pebbles should be performed after the sun has risen and before it has passed its peak in the sky, but later on, during the Days of *Tashrīq*,[44] it is performed after the sun has begun its decline .

When he has thrown his pebbles, the pilgrim should slaughter a sacrificial animal *[hadī]* if he has one with him. He should also shave off or cut short all [the hair on] his head. (If the pilgrim is a woman, however, she must shorten her hair by the length of the finger tip.)

At this stage, the pilgrim should move on to Mecca, where he should perform the major ablution *[yaghtasil]* and the minor ablution *[yatawaḍḍa']*, then circumambulate [the Ka'ba]. This is the 'visiting circumambulation' *[ṭawāf az-ziyāra]*, and it should be designated as such in the pilgrim's intention *[niyya]*. He should also perform two cycles of ritual prayer *[yuṣallī rak'atain]* behind the *Maqām* [the Station (of Abraham)].

When he has finished all this, he may run to and fro *[sa'ā]* between aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwa. This is optional for him, since he has already

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[42] There are three pillars *[jamarāt]* at Minā. They are believed to mark the successive spots where Satan appeared, in the guise of an old man, to Adam, Abraham and Ishmael (peace be upon them all), who were taught by Gabriel (peace be upon him) to chase him away by pelting him with seven small pebbles.

[43] The words of the *talbiyya* are:

Doubly at Your service,	*labbaik*
O Allāh!	*Allāhumma*
Doubly at Your service!	*labbaik*.
No partner have You!	*lā sharīka laka*
Doubly at Your service!	*labbaik*.
Yours is the praise	*inna'l-hamda*
and the grace,	*wa'n-ni'mata laka*
and Yours is the kingdom!	*wa'l-mulk*.
No partner have You!	*lā sharīka lak*.

[44] *Tashrīq* means the drying up of the blood from the animals sacrificed. The Days of *Tashrīq* are the three days immediately following the Day of Sacrifice *[Yaum an-Nahr]*.

The Book of the Alms-due

[Kitāb az-Zakāt]

To be subject to paying the alms-due, one must own a certain minimum amount of property *[māl zakawī]*.

In specific terms, one must possess twenty *mithqāl* of gold;[11] or two hundred dirhams of silver coin; or the equivalent value in mercantile commodities; or five camels; or thirty head of cattle; or forty *ghanam* [sheep and/or goats], which must have been out to pasture for one whole year.

None of this applies, however, in the case of a slave *['abd]* or a *mukātab*,[12] since neither of these is under obligation to pay the alms-due *[zakāt]*.

[In cases where the *zakāt* is payable], the amount to be deducted from gold and silver is one quarter of one tenth. Thus from twenty dīnārs [gold coins] the deduction is one half of one dīnār, since one tenth is equal to two dīnārs, and one quarter of this amount is one half of one dīnār. From two hundred dirhams [silver coins] the deduction will be five dirhams, since one tenth is equal to twenty, and one quarter of this amount is five.

On five camels *[ibil]*, the alms-due is one *shāt* [sheep or goat], which may be either a sheep termed *jadha'*, which has reached the age of six months, or a goat termed *thaniyy*, which has completed one year of its life. On ten camels, two sheep or goats are due; on fifteen, three sheep or goats; on twenty, four sheep or goats. On twenty-five camels, the *zakāt* is a female camel termed *bint makhāḍ*, which has completed one year of life and entered the second, or, if none of these is available, a male camel termed *ibn labūn*, which has completed two years of life and

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[11] One *mithqāl* is equal to one and a half drams. (As an apothecaries' weight, the dram is a unit equal to one eighth of an ounce; as an avoirdupois weight, it is a unit equal to one sixteenth of an ounce.)

[12] A *mukātab* is a slave who has made a written contract with his master, stipulating that the slave will be granted his freedom on the payment of a certain sum.

He should repeat this procedure on the second and third days [of *tashrīq*], but if he prefers to speed his departure and not cast pebbles on the third day, he should bury his remaining pebbles there and set off, with Mecca as his destination. His journey will bring him to al-Abṭaḥ, where he should stay long enough to perform the ritual prayers of noon [*ẓuhr*], afternoon [*'aṣr*], sunset [*maghrib*] and late evening [*'ishā'*], then take a little nap before going on to enter Mecca.

He may lodge in Mecca itself, or in one of the other places nearby, such as az-Zāhir or al-Abṭaḥ.

If he wishes to enter the House [the Ka'ba], he must go in barefoot and perform a supererogatory prayer [*yuṣallī naflan*] while inside.

He should drink some Zamzam water, and take a supply of it, with the intention of obtaining whatever benefit he would prefer to receive from it, such as knowledge [*'ilm*], forgiveness [*maghfira*] or contentment [*riḍwān*], because of the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The water of Zamzam is for whatever one drinks it for.

He should frequently pause to rest and look at the Ka'ba, since it is reported in some traditional accounts [*akhbār*] that looking at it is an act of worship [*'ibāda*].

The pilgrim should not depart until he has taken his leave of the House. He should therefore circumambulate it seven times, then stand between the corner and the door to make invocation, saying:

O Allāh, this is Your House	*Allāhumma hādha Baituka,*
and I am Your servant,	*wa ana 'abduka*
the son of Your servant and	*wa'bnu 'abdika*
the son of your maidservant!	*wa'bnu amatik.*
You have transported me	*ḥamaltanī*
on those of Your creatures	*'alā mā*
which You have made	*sakhkharta lī*
subservient to me.	*min khalqik.*
And You have caused me	*wa sayyartanī*
to travel through Your lands,	*fī bilādika*
until You brought me here	*ḥattā ballaghtanī*
by Your gracious favor.	*bi-ni'matik.*
You have also helped me	*wa a'antanī*
to perform my pilgrim rites,	*'alā qaḍā'i nusukī*

[riwāya], it is also permissible to use one's *zakāt* to purchase and then emancipate a wholly-owned slave *[raqaba]*.

6. Debtors, meaning those who are burdened by debts which they are incapable of discharging.

7. [People engaged in fighting] in the cause of Allāh *[fī sabīli'llāh]*. These are the holy-warriors *[ghuzāt]* who receive no remuneration from the treasury of the Imām or other public authorities *[salāṭīn]*. [They are entitled to receive *zakāt*] even if they are rich.

8. The 'son of the road' *[ibn as-sabīl]*, meaning the traveler who is far from home, as opposed to one who is initiating a journey from his own town.

While a person must pay the *zakāt* for which he is liable as an obligatory religious duty *[farḍ]*, he is also recommended to make voluntary charitable donations *[ṣadaqat at-taṭawwuʻ]* at all other times, by night and by day, be it little or much, especially in the blessed months *[ashhur mubāraka]*, like the month of Rajab, Shaʻbān and the month of Ramaḍān, on the days of festival *[ʻīd]* and ʻĀshūrā',[13] and also in times of drought and scarcity, for the sake of securing physical health and the welfare of his property and his family, swift success in this world and abundant reward in the hereafter.

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[13] ʻĀshūrā' is the 10th day of the month of Muḥarram.

On how to perform the essential rites of Pilgrimage when one has little time to spare.

If the pilgrim is subject to time constraints, and is afraid of being too late to perform the [essential] rite of Standing *[waqfa]* at ʻArafāt, then, provided he has entered the state of consecration at the assembly point *[mīqāt]*, he should start at ʻArafāt and perform the Standing there.

Then he should move on from there after the setting of the sun, in order to do all that we have mentioned in connection with the overnight stay at Muzdalifa, followed by the casting of pebbles *[ramy]* at Minā.

Then, when he has entered Mecca, he should perform two circumambulations *[ṭāfa ṭawāfain]*, intending the first as the 'arrival' *[qudūm]* and the second as the 'visit' *[ziyāra]*.

He should then run between aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwa, after which everything [forbidden while in the state of consecration] will become lawful to him again.

At this stage, he should go back to Minā for the casting of pebbles during the three Days [of *Tashrīq*], then carry out all the actions required of him, in the manner we have described in the foregoing subsections.

◆

A brief description of the Visitation [*‘Umra*].

The state of consecration for the Visitation [*‘Umra*] must be entered into at one of the legally prescribed assembly points [*mīqāt shar‘ī*], the locations of which have been mentioned above,[46] after the Visitant [*mu‘tamir*] has performed the major ablution [*yaghtasil*], freshened himself with perfume, and performed a ritual prayer of two cycles [*yuṣallī rak‘atain*].

[On his arrival in Mecca] he must circumambulate the House seven times, run between aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwa, and shorten or shave off [all the hair on his head].

At this point he will cease to be subject to the restraints of the state of consecration, unless he has brought a sacrificial animal [*hadī*] along with him, in which case, if he is in Mecca he should go out to at-Tan‘īm and reenter the state of consecration as from there, so he must act accordingly.

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[46] See p. 28 above.

On the essential elements [*arkān*], necessary elements [*wājibāt*]and recommended observances [*masnūnāt*] of the Pilgrimage [*Ḥajj*].

The only thing that renders the Pilgrimage [*Ḥajj*] totally null and void is sexual intercourse [*waṭ'*], inside the vulva or short of the vulva, with ejaculation.

The essential elements [*arkān*] of the Pilgrimage are four:[47]

1. Entering the state of consecration [*iḥrām*].
2. The rite of Standing [*wuqūf*] [at 'Arafāt].
3. The Circumambulation of the Visit [*ṭawāf az-ziyāra*].
4. The rite of *sa'y* [running to and from between Ṣafā and Marwa].

If the pilgrim omits any one of these essential elements, his Pilgrimage is defective [*nāqiṣ*] and it is incumbent upon him to perform it again properly, either in that same year or in the next year following, and he must do so while in the state of consecration [*muḥrim*]. Under no circumstances can the deficiency be rectified by [a sacrifice of] blood.

The necessary elements [*wājibāt*] are five in number:

1. The overnight stay at Muzdalifa, until after midnight.
2. The overnight stay at Minā.
3. The casting of pebbles [*ramy*] [at the satanic pillars].
4. Shaving the head [*ḥilāqa*].
5. The Farewell Circumambulation [*ṭawāf al-wadā'*].

If the pilgrim omits any one of these, he can make good the omission by a blood-sacrifice, which must be that of a sheep or goat. In the case of ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], as we have mentioned above, the omission of necessary elements *[wājibāt]* should be rectified by performing the prostration of absentmindedness *[sujūd as-sahw]*.

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[47] **Author's note** : According to one of the Shaikhs (may Allāh have mercy upon him), it has only two essential elements [*ruknān*], one of them being the rite of Standing at 'Arafa, and the second being the Circumambulation of the House. The former statement is the correct one, however.

As for the recommended observances *[masnūnāt]*, these are fifteen in number:

1. Performing the major ablution *[ightisāl]* in preparation for the state of consecration *[iḥrām]*, for the entry into Mecca, for the rite of Standing *[wuqūf]* at ʿArafa, for the overnight stay at Muzdalifa, for the casting of pebbles at the satanic pillars *[ramy al-jimār]* during the Days of Minā, and for the Circumambulation of the Visit *[ṭawāf az-ziyāra]*.
2. The Circumambulation of Arrival *[ṭawāf al-qudūm]*.
3. Moving at the pace between a walk and a run *[ramal]*.
4. Tucking the upper garment under the right armpit, so as to cover the left shoulder and leave the right shoulder exposed *[iḍṭibāʿ]*, during the circumambulation.
5. The [extra] *saʿy*.
6. Touching *[istilām]* the two corners [of the Kaʿba].
7. Kissing [the Black Stone].
8. Climbing to a high point on [the hills of] aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwa.
9. Making three overnight stays at Minā.
10. Standing beside the Sacred Monument *[al-Maʿshar al-Ḥarām]*.
11. The sermons *[khuṭab]*.
12. The invocations *[adhkār]*.
13. Emphasizing the near-running pace *[saʿy]* where it occurs.
14. Emphasizing the walking pace *[mashy]* where it occurs.
15. The two cycles [of ritual prayer] after the circumambulation *[ṭawāf]*.

If the pilgrim omits these observances, or any one of them, he is omitting that which is extrameritorious and he incurs no penalty.

On the essential elements *[arkān]*, necessary elements *[wājibāt]* and recommended observances *[masnūnāt]*of the Visitation *[ʿUmra]*.

As for the Visitation *[ʿUmra]*, its essential elements *[arkān]* are three in number:

1. The state of consecration *[iḥrām]*.
2. The circumambulation of the House *[ṭawāf al-Bait]*.
3. The *saʿy* [rapid pace] between aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwa.

It has only one necessary element *[wājib]*, namely the shaving [of the head].

Its recommended observances *[sunan]* are:

1. The major ablution *[ghusl]* when entering the state of consecration *[iḥrām]*.
2. The supplications *[adʿiya]*.
3. The invocations recommended by the sacred law *[adhkār mashrūʿa]* during the circumambulation and the *saʿy*.

The rules governing omissions are as we have explained them in connection with the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*.

◆

On visiting Medina and the tomb of the Prophet [Allāh bless him and give him peace].

If Allāh (Exalted is He) blesses the pilgrim with good health, and he reaches Medina, what is considered preferable *[mustaḥabb]* for him is that he should make his way to the Mosque of the Prophet *[Masjid an-Nabī]* (Allāh bless him and give him peace), where he should say as he enters:

O Allāh, bless	*Allāhumma ṣalli ʿalā*
our Master Muḥammad,	*sayyidinā Muḥammadin*
and the family	*wa ʿalā āli*
of our Master Muḥammad.	*sayyidinā Muḥammad.*
And open for me	*wa'ftah lī*
the doors of Your mercy,	*abwāba rahmatika*
and keep me away from	*wa kaffi ʿannī*
the doors of Your chastisement!	*abwāba ʿadhābik.*
Praise be to Allāh,	*al-hamdu li'llāhi*
Lord of All the Worlds!	*Rabbi'l-ʿālamīn.*

As he approaches the Tomb, he should keep it opposite him and between him and the *Qibla*, then he should put the wall of the *Qibla* behind his back, so that the Tomb is in front of him, directly facing him with the pulpit *[minbar]* is to his left. Standing in the vicinity of the pulpit, he should say:

Peace be upon you,	*As-salāmu ʿalaika*
O Prophet,	*ayyuha'n-Nabī.*
and the mercy of Allāh	*wa raḥmatu'llāhi*
and His gracious favors!	*wa barakātuh.*
O Allāh, bless	*Allāhumma ṣalli ʿalā*
our Master Muḥammad,	*sayyidinā Muḥammadin*
and the family	*wa ʿalā āli*
of our Master Muḥammad,	*sayyidinā Muḥammadin*
as You have blessed Abraham!	*kamā ṣallaita ʿalā Ibrāhīm.*

Surely You deserve	*innaka*
to be praised and extolled!	*Ḥamīdun Majīd.*
O Allāh, grant	*Allāhumma āti*
our Master Muḥammad	*sayyidanā Muḥammadani'l-*
the most intimate favor, and	*wasīlata*
the most excellent distinction,	*wa'l-faḍīlata*
and the most exalted rank,	*wa'd-darajata'r-rafī‘ata*
and the praiseworthy station	*wa'l-maqāma'l-maḥmūda'lladhī*
which You have promised him!	*wa‘adtah.*
O Allāh, bless the spirit of	*Allāhumma ṣalli ‘alā rūḥi*
Muḥammad among all spirits,	*Muḥammadin fi'l-arwāḥ:*
and bless his body	*wa ṣalli ‘alā jasadihi*
among all bodies.	*fi'l-ajsād.*
For he delivered	*kamā ballagha*
Your Message,	*risālataka*
and recited Your revelations,	*wa talā āyātaka*
and carried out	*wa ṣada‘a*
Your commandment,	*bi-amrika*
and strove in Your cause,	*wa jāhada fī sabīlika*
and ordained obedience	*wa amara bi-ṭā‘atika*
to You and forbade	*wa nahā*
disobedience to You,	*‘an ma‘ṣiyatika*
and fought Your foe	*wa ‘ādā ‘aduwwaka*
and befriended Your friend	*wa wālā waliyyaka*
and Your servant,	*wa ‘abdaka*
until the Certainty (of death)	*ḥattā*
came to him.	*atāhu'l-yaqīn.*
O Allāh, You have said	*Allāhumma innaka qulta*
in Your Book to our Prophet:	*fī kitābika li-nabiyyinā:*
"And if only, when they	*wa law annahum*
had wronged themselves,	*idh ẓalamū anfusahum*
they had come to you and	*jā’ūka*
asked forgiveness of Allāh,	*fa-'staghfaru'llāha*
and the Messenger had	*wa'staghfara*
asked forgiveness for them,	*lahumu'r-Rasūlu*
they would have found Allāh	*la-wajadu'llāha*
Relenting, Merciful." (4:64)	*Tawwāban Raḥīmā.*
And I came to Your House	*wa innī ataitu Baitaka*
repenting of my sins,	*tā’iban min dhunūbī*
asking for forgiveness.	*mustaghfirā.*
So I beg You to grant me	*fa-as’aluka*
forgiveness now,	*an tūjiba lī'l-maghfira*
as You granted it to any who	*kamā awjabtahā liman*
came to it during his lifetime,	*atāhu fī hāli hayātihi*
and confessed his sins	*fa-aqarra ‘indahu*

beside it,	*bi-dhunūbihi*
for his Prophet would pray	*fa-daʿā lahu*
for him and You would	*nabiyyuhu*
forgive him.	*fa-ghafarta lah.*
O Allāh, I plead with You	*Allāhumma innī atawajjahu*
through Your Prophet,	*bi-nabiyyika*
(Your peace be upon him!)	*(alaihi salāmuka)*
the Prophet of Mercy.	*nabiyyi'r-raḥma.*
O Messenger of Allāh,	*yā Rasūla'llāhi*
through you I plead	*innī atawajjahu bika*
with my Lord, that He	*ilā Rabbī*
may forgive me my sins.	*li-yaghfira lī dhunūbī.*
O Allāh, I beg You	*Allāhumma innī asʾaluka*
for his sake,	*bi-ḥaqqihi*
to forgive me and	*an taghfira lī*
grant me Your mercy.	*wa tarhamanī.*
O Allāh, make Muḥammad	*Allāhumma 'jʿal*
the foremost of those	*Muhammadan*
who intercede,	*awwala'sh-shāfiʿīna*
and the most successful	*wa anjaḥa's-*
of those who plead,	*sāʾilīna*
and the most noble	*wa akrama'l-awwalīna*
of the first and the last.	*wa'l-ākhirīn.*
O Allāh, as we have	*Allāhumma kamā*
had faith in him	*āmannā bihi*
though we never saw him	*wa lam narah:*
and believed in him	*wa ṣaddaqnāhu*
though we never met him,	*wa lam nalqah:*
let us enter where he has	*fa-adkhilnā*
entered, and resurrect us	*madkhalahu wa aḥshirnā*
among his company.	*fī zumratih.*
And bring us to his basin,	*wa awridnā hauḍahu*
and let us drink from his cup	*wa asqinā bi-kaʾsihi*
a thirst-quenching, tasty,	*mashraban rawiyyan*
health-giving draught,	*sāʾighan hanīʾan*
after which we shall never	*lā naẓmaʾu*
be thirsty again,	*baʿdahu abadā:*
neither villains	*ghaira khazāyā*
nor traitors,	*wa lā nākithīna*
neither renegades	*wa lā māriqīna*
nor infidels,	*wa lā jāhidīna*
neither doubters	*wa lā murtābīna*
nor objects of wrath,	*wa lā maghḍūbun ʿalaihim*
and not wandering astray.	*wa lā ḍāllīn.*

And make us worthy	*wa'j'alnā*
of his intercession.	*min ahli shafā'atih.*

The pilgrim should then advance to his right, then say:

Peace be on you both,	*as-salāmu 'alaikumā*
O Companions	*yā ṣāḥibai*
of Allāh's Messenger	*Rasūli'llāh*
(Allāh bless him	*(ṣalla'llāhu 'alaihi*
and give him peace)	*wa sallam)*
and the Mercy of Allāh	*wa raḥmatu'llāhi*
and His gracious favors!	*wa barakātuh.*
Peace be upon you, O Abū Bakr,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
the Champion of Truth!	*yā Abā Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq.*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O 'Umar, the Criterion of Truth!	*yā 'Umar al-Fārūq.*
O Allāh, reward them both	*Allāhumma 'jzihumā*
on behalf of their Prophet,	*'an nabiyyihimā*
and (reward them both)	*wa 'ani'l-islāmi*
well on behalf of Islām.	*khairā.*
And forgive us	*wa'ghfir lanā*
and our brethren who have	*wa li-ikhwānina'lladhīna*
preceded us in faith,	*sabaqūnā bi'l-īmān:*
and let our hearts feel	*wa lā taj'al*
no rancor toward those	*fī qulūbinā ghillan*
who have believed.	*li'lladhīna āmanū.*
Our Lord, You are indeed	*Rabbanā innaka*
Kind, Compassionate!	*Ra'ūfun Raḥīm.*

Next, the pilgrim should perform a ritual prayer of two cycles *[yuṣallī rak'atain]* and sit down. It is considered preferable that he should perform his prayer between the Tomb and the pulpit, in the [area of the Mosque known as] the Meadow *[rawḍa]*.

If he would like to do so, he may stroke the pulpit in order to derive blessing from it. He may also perform a ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* in the Mosque of Qubā', and he may go to the tombs of the martyrs *[shuhadā']* and pay them a [spiritual] visit *[ziyāra]*, offering many supplications while he is there.

Then, when he is ready to leave Medina, he should go again to the Mosque of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), where he should approach the Tomb and salute Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), going through the same actions as on his first visit.

Next, the pilgrim should go out [of the Sacred Mosque] to [the small hill of] aṣ-Ṣafā, by way of the gate of that name. He should climb the hill to a point from which he can get a view of the Kaʿba, then proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh *[yukabbir]* [30] three times and say:

Praise be to Allāh for	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*
the guidance He has given us!	*ʿalā mā hadānā.*
There is no god but Allāh Alone.	*lā ilāha illa'llāhu Waḥdah.*
No partner has He.	*lā sharīka lah.*
He has kept His promise,	*ṣadaqa waʿdah:*
and He has aided His servant,	*wa naṣara ʿabdah:*
and He has put the hosts	*wa hazama'l-aḥzāba*
to flight by Himself Alone.	*Waḥdah.*
There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa'llāh:*
and we worship none but Him,	*wa lā naʿbudu illā iyyāh:*
devoting the religion	*mukhliṣīna*
to Him sincerely,	*lahu'd-dīn:*
even though	*wa law*
the unbelievers do not like it.	*kariha'l-kāfirūn.*

He should then go down [the hill of aṣ-Ṣafā], utter the *talbiyya*[31] and offer his supplication a second and a third time. He should go on walking down, until there is a distance of six cubits *[adhruʿ]* between himself and the green mile-post erected beside the Mosque. Then he should walk at a more rapid pace until he reaches the two green mile-posts. From this point he should slacken his pace until he reaches [the small hill of] al-Marwa, up which he must climb in order to do what he did on aṣ-Ṣafā.

He will then descend [from al-Marwa], walking at an easy pace over the appropriate stretch, and almost running where a brisk pace *[saʿy]* is called for, until he arrives at aṣ-Ṣafā. He must then repeat the whole procedure.

A total of seven laps must be covered, starting out from aṣ-Ṣafā and ending up at al-Marwa. While performing this rite, the pilgrim must be

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[30] By saying: "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]"

[31] The words of the *talbiyya* are:

Doubly at Your service,	*labbaik*
O Allāh!	*Allāhumma*
Doubly at Your service!	*labbaik.*
No partner have You!	*lā sharīka laka*
Doubly at Your service!	*labbaik.*
Yours is the praise	*inna'l-ḥamda*
and the grace,	*wa'n-niʿmata laka*
and Yours is the kingdom!	*wa'l-mulk.*
No partner have You!	*lā sharīka lak.*

The Book of Good Manners
[Kitāb al-Ādāb]

On greeting with "Peace be upon you!" *[as-salāmu ʿalaikum]*

To take the initiative in offering the greeting *[salām]* is a practice based on the noble Prophetic example *[sunna]*, and returning it is even more imperative *[ākad]* than being the first to offer it.

The person who gives the greeting has two options as far as its [Arabic] formulation is concerned:

1. He may include the letters *alif* and *lām* [of the Arabic definite article], in which case he will say:

(The) peace be upon you,	*al-salāmu ʿalaikum*[48]
and the mercy of Allāh	*wa raḥmatu'llāhi*
and His gracious blessings!	*wa barakātuh*.

2. He may omit the two letters of the definite article, in which case he will say:

(A) peace be upon you,	*salāmun ʿalaikum*
and the mercy of Allāh	*wa raḥmatu'llāhi*
and His gracious blessings!	*wa barakātuh*.

He should not add anything further to this.

A tradition *[ḥadīth]* has been handed down concerning this subject, namely the one in which ʿImrān the son of al-Ḥusain (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with them both) is reported as having said:

> An Arab tribesman once came to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace and said: "Peace be upon you *[as-salāmu ʿalaikum]*!" He returned his greeting and the man then sat down, whereupon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: "Ten!"

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[48] In the Arabic script, the definite article <*al-*> is always spelled with the letters *alif* and *lām*, regardless of the actual pronunciation. When the first consonant of the word to which the definite article is prefixed is one of the so-called "sun letters" *[ḥurūf shamsiyya]*, which include the letter *sīn*, the first consonant in <*salām*>, the L-sound is assimulated to the sound of the following consonant. Thus, while the transliteration <*al-salāmu*> represents the Arabic spelling, the actual pronunciation is represented by <*as-salāmu*>.

> Then another came along and said: "Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh and His gracious blessings!" He returned his greeting, the man sat down, and then the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: "Twenty!"—meaning: "[You have earned the merit of] twenty good deeds!"

The recommended custom *[sunna]* is for the person who comes walking by to give the greeting to someone who is sitting down, and for the rider to greet the person who is walking or sitting.

The greeting of one member of a group on behalf of the rest is sufficient, and it is likewise sufficient for a single member of the group to return a greeting.

It is not permissible under any circumstances to take the initiative in greeting a *mushrik* [polytheist; idolater; one who attributes partners to Allāh].

If the *mushrik* takes the initiative, the Muslim should respond to his greeting by saying: "And upon you *[wa 'alaik]*!"

As for one's response to a fellow Muslim, it should be to return his greeting by saying:

And upon you be peace!	*wa 'alaikumu's-salām.*

It is preferable, however, to add the words:

and the mercy of Allāh	*wa raḥmatu'llāhi*
and His gracious blessings!	*wa barakātuh.*

If a Muslim says to a fellow Muslim [simply]: "Peace *[salām]*!" the latter should not give him a greeting in reply. He should let him know that this is not the proper salutation *[taḥiyya]* of Islām, because it is not a complete statement *[kalām tāmm]*.

It is considered commendable *[yustaḥabb]* for women to give the greeting *[salām]* to one another.

As for a man's offering the greeting to a young woman, this is regarded as reprehensible *[makrūh]*, but if she is an elderly lady *[barza]* there is no objection.

As for giving the greeting to youngsters *[ṣibyān]*, it is recommended *[mustaḥabb]*, because of the contribution it can make to their education in good manners.

It is likewise considered commendable for someone who gets up to leave a meeting *[majlis]* to salute the seated company, and to greet them in a similar manner when he returns to join them. The same applies if

some barrier intervenes between him and them, such as a door or a wall.

If a person reencounters a man he has already greeted once, he should salute him again.

The greeting should not be offered to those who are involved in sins of disobedience [*ma'āṣī*], for instance by someone who happens upon a group of people playing chess [*shaṭranj*] and backgammon [*nard*], drinking wine, playing games with walnuts and placing bets [*qimār*]. If they salute him first, however, he should return their greeting, unless he has good reason to believe that they may be shamed out of their sinful activities by his refusal to respond, in which case he should withhold his response.

A Muslim should not avoid his brother's company on more than three occasions in a row, unless the person concerned is one of those who are guilty of heretical innovations [*bida'*], serious error and sins of disobedience, for permanent avoidance of such types is the recommended course. By offering the greeting [*salām*], one is saved from the sin [*ithm*] of shunning a fellow Muslim.

The Muslim is also recommended to shake hands [*muṣāḥafa*] with his brother. If he has initiated the handshake, he should not withdraw his hand until the other withdraws his.

It is permissible [for Muslim brothers] to hug each other, and to kiss each other on the head and the hand, as a request for blessing [*tabarruk*] and an expression of pious devotion [*tadayyun*]. Kissing on the mouth, however, is considered reprehensible [*makrūh*].

⁂

On certain habits that are considered reprehensible.

It is considered reprehensible to whistle, to clap one's hands, or to crack the joints of one's fingers during the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

It is also reprehensible to rip one's clothes apart during the spiritual concert *[samā']*, at least in the case of someone who is merely affecting ecstasy *[mutawājid]*. There is no objection to it in the case of someone who is having a genuine ecstatic experience *[wājid]*.

The following habits are all disapproved of:

1. Eating on the road.
2. Stretching a leg among those with whom one is sitting in company.
3. Adopting a reclining posture *[ittikā']* that takes one out of the normal sitting position, because this constitutes arrogant and insulting behavior toward one's sitting companions, unless there is some good excuse for it.
4. Trailing one's clothes *[iṭālat ath-thiyāb]*.
5. Chewing gum *[maḍgh al-'ilk]*, because it is a disgusting habit.
6. Excessive boisterousness in laughing and guffawing *[qahqaha]*, and any unnecessary raising of the voice.

A person should walk at a moderate pace, not rushing to the point where he bumps into passers-by and tires himself out, and not striding in a manner that gives him an air of self-conceit.

In mourning *[bukā']*, loud wailing *[naḥīb]* and the repetition of eulogies *[ta'dād]* are frowned upon, unless inspired by fear of Allāh (Exalted is He), or prompted by regret for opportunities missed through neglect, or if the person is weeping because he is broken-hearted over his failure to achieve a standard he had in view.

It is reprehensible to get rid of one's filth in the presence of other people.

It is reprehensible to talk in squalid places like the steam bath *[ḥammām]*, the toilet *[khalā']* and so on, where one should also refrain from offering the greeting and from responding to someone who offers it *[musallim]*.

It is reprehensible to bare one's head in public, or any part of the body which it has become the custom to keep covered, in addition to the private parts *['aura]*, which it is strictly unlawful *[yuḥarram]* to expose.

It is reprehensible for a person to swear by his own father, or indeed by anyone at all except Allāh, so if he takes an oath he must swear by Allāh, or else let him keep silent.

Thus it has come down to us in the tradition *[athar]* ascribed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

◆

On seeking permission to enter someone's presence.

The proper way to seek permission to enter someone's presence *[isti'dhān]* is to approach the door of the person concerned and greet him with the words:

Peace be upon you!	*as-salāmu 'alaikum!*
May I come in?	*a-adkhulu?*

This practice is based on the following traditional report:

"A man belonging to the tribe of the Banū 'Āmir once sought permission to enter the presence of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) while the latter was at home, so he said: 'May I pop in *[a-aliju]?*'

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) thereupon told his servant: 'Go out to this fellow and teach him the proper way to ask permission!' So the servant told him: 'You must say: "Peace be upon you! May I come in? *[as-salāmu 'alaikum—a-adkhulu]*."'

"The man took note of what he was told, so he said: 'Peace be upon you! May I come in?' He was then given leave to enter, and in he went."

The would-be visitor should not turn his back to the door, nor should he keep too great a distance from it, because he will then be prevented from hearing the response.

He may repeat his request up to three times. If he gets a reply, well and good. Otherwise he should go away, unless he has good reason to be convinced that his call has not been heard, due to some problem caused by distance or distraction, in which case it is in order for him to go on trying more than three times.

The traditional basis for this is the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) that has been handed down by Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> Permission to enter may be sought three times [on the same occasion]. If you receive the permission you seek, go in, but if not, come back another time.

This applies equally to strangers and to very close female relatives,[49] such as one's mother and those whose status is similar to hers, because when a man once asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "Am I obliged to ask permission to enter my own mother's presence?" he said "Yes!" The man then said: "But I live at home with her!"

To this the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied: "You must still seek permission to enter her presence." The man objected: "But I am her servant!"

This time the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said to him: "You must seek her permission. Would you like to see her naked?"

As for a man's own wife, or a female slave *[ama]* with whom it is lawful for him to have sexual intercourse *[waṭ']*, he is not obliged to seek permission before entering her presence in either case, because the most that could happen would be that he might catch the woman lying stretched out with nothing to cover her, and it is permissible for him to see the bodies of such women.

Nevertheless, it is considered commendable for him to shuffle his shoes first, on entering the house, as a way of letting it be known that he is coming inside. Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] made this a definite rule, according to the report of Muhanni'.

Once he has come inside, the man should greet *[yusallim]* his family, so that the good of his household may be increased, as the tradition *[athar]* tells us.

We shall provide a full treatment of this subject in the section entitled *On entering one's own home*, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills.[50]

He should not come home to his family at night, because, although the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had declared it forbidden for a man to come home to his family at night, two men did so—and each of them found something he disapproved of in the situation of his family.

Once a person has been given permission to enter someone else's home, and he has gone inside, he should sit wherever the owner of the house allows him to sit.

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[49] *al-aqārib al-muḥarramāt*, literally, relatives within the forbidden degrees [of Islamic marriage].

[50] See p. 75 below.

[These rules apply] even if the person visited is a member of one of the protected communities *[ahl adh-dhimma]*.[51]

If someone calls unexpectedly on a group of people while they are at their meal, he should not take anything to eat, unless the person providing the food is one of those who make it their regular custom to offer generous hospitality, and derive pleasure from doing so.

* * *

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[51] The *ahl adh-dhimma* are the Jewish, Christian or Sabean subjects of an Islamic state, who, in return for the payment of a special tax, are entitled under Islamic law to security of their persons and their property.

On what is best done with the right hand, or on the right-hand side, and what is best done with the left hand, or on the left-hand side.

The recommended practice is to use the right hand for taking or accepting things, for eating and drinking, and for shaking hands.

One should also start on the right-hand side of the body when performing the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']*, when stepping into shoes or sandals, and when putting on clothes.

Similarly, one should put the right foot forward when entering blessed places, such as mosques *[masājid]*, the shrines of martyrs and saints *[mashāhid]*, lodgings and dwellings.

As for the left hand, it should be used for dealing with things that are unclean and for getting rid of waste matter from the body, as in the actions performed when snuffing water to clear the nostrils *[istinthār]*, purifying oneself after excretion *[istinjā']*, clearing mucus from the nose, and washing away impurities *[najāsāt]* of all kinds. [The left hand should always be used for such purposes,] unless this would be very difficult for a particular individual, or actually impossible, as in the case of someone who has suffered paralysis or amputation of the left hand.

One should not walk about wearing only one sandal, unless it is necessary to do so briefly, while the other one is useless because of a broken strap.

If someone needs to deliver a document *[tawqī']* or a written note, he should approach the recipient on his right.

When walking in the company of someone higher than yourself in rank and dignity, you should walk to the right of him, treating him like the leader *[imām]* during the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. If the person is beneath you in rank, you should keep him on your right and walk to the left of him, although it is maintained by some that the recommended practice is to walk on the right-hand side in all cases, so that the space to the left [of one's companion] will be left clear for spitting and other such purposes.

⁂

On the prohibition of naked exposure in general, and in the particular case of taking a bath.

Abū Dāwūd (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) provides a traditional report, complete with its chain of transmission *[isnād]*, according to which Bahz ibn Ḥakīm heard from his father that his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him) had told him:

"I once said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, where may we expose our private parts *['aurāt]*, and where must we avoid doing so?' To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'You must preserve your private parts from exposure to anyone other than your wife or your slave concubine.'[52] I then said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, what if a group of people are gathered in close proximity to one another?' He said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'If you can manage not to let anyone see them, do not expose them to view.' When I went on to say: 'O Messenger of Allāh, what if one of us happens to be all by himself?' he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Allāh is even more entitled to be treated with modesty than are human beings!"

According to another report by Abū Dāwūd, complete with its chain of transmission, we have it on the authority of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> A man should not look at the private parts *['aura]* of a man, and a woman should not look at the private parts of a woman. A man should not come into contact, skin to skin, with another man inside a single article of clothing, nor should a woman come into contact, skin to skin, with another woman inside a single article of clothing.

In the case of taking a bath in a secluded spot, with no one watching, it is still considered improper to wash one's whole body without [keeping the private parts screened behind] a towel *[mi'zar]*.

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[52] Literally, "what your right hand possesses *[mā malakat yamīnuka]*." This expression occurs in the Qur'ān (33:52).

[These rules apply] even if the person visited is a member of one of the protected communities *[ahl adh-dhimma]*.[51]

If someone calls unexpectedly on a group of people while they are at their meal, he should not take anything to eat, unless the person providing the food is one of those who make it their regular custom to offer generous hospitality, and derive pleasure from doing so.

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[51] The *ahl adh-dhimma* are the Jewish, Christian or Sabean subjects of an Islamic state, who, in return for the payment of a special tax, are entitled under Islamic law to security of their persons and their property.

A more lenient view attributed to Imām Aḥmad.

Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) may have taken a more lenient view of the matter [discussed in the preceding subsection].

According to another account of his doctrine, it would seem that he did not altogether disapprove [of solitary bathing in the nude], since on one occasion, when he was asked about the case of a man at the edge of a river with no one to observe him, he said: "I would hope *[arjū]*...," with the implication that there was nothing wrong in it.

Stronger and more correct, however, is the above-mentioned argument in favor of prohibition.

On what constitutes the state of major ritual purity *[aṭ-ṭahārat al-kubrā]*.

There are two versions of the state of major ritual purity, one being complete or perfect *[kāmila]* and the other merely sufficient or adequate *[mujzi'a]*.

As for the perfect version, it is achieved when a person performs his ablutions in the following manner:

1. He must start out with the specific intention *[niyya]*, meaning that he must have made a firm resolution to remove the major cause of ritual impurity *[al-ḥadath al-akbar]* or the condition of uncleanness termed *janāba*. It will be more meritorious if he expresses this intention verbally, while at the same time holding his resolution within his heart.
2. He must invoke the Name of Allāh [by saying "*Bismi'llāh*"] at the moment of reaching for the water.
3. He must wash both his hands three times.
4. He must wash off any obnoxious substance that may be adhering to him.
5. He must then perform his minor ritual ablution *[wuḍū']*, doing it completely except for the washing of his feet, which he will leave till the end of this whole procedure.
6. He must sprinkle three handfuls of water on his head, using it to wet the roots of his hair.
7. He must pour water all over the rest of his body.
8. He must rub his wet body with his hands, following all the folds and wrinkles and making quite sure that the water gets into them, because of the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Run your fingers through your hair and clean the skin, for under every hair there lies an uncleanness *[janāba]*.

9. He must start with his right-hand side [i.e., he must wash the right arm before the left arm, and so on].

10. Finally, he must move away from the spot where he has been bathing, and then proceed to wash his feet.

If he has remained unaffected, throughout this procedure, by any of the factors that spoil the state of minor ritual purity *[ṭahāra ṣughrā]*, it will now be permissible for him to perform the prayer in this state of purity [which he has just achieved], because in our judgment he has removed both [the major and minor] causes of impurity *[al-ḥadathain]* at one and the same time. If he has not [preserved that state], however, he must perform a fresh minor ablution *[wuḍū']* in order to be ready for the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

The principle on which all of these rules are based can be found in the traditional report handed down from 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), who said:

"Whenever Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) wished to perform an ablution *[ghusl]* to remove *janāba*, he used to wash his hands three times. Then he would take water in his right hand and pour it over his left hand. Then he would rinse his mouth out thoroughly and snuff water up his nostrils three times. He would wash his face three times, and his arms three times. Then he would pour water on his head three times. Then he would wash the whole of his body, and finally, when he had moved away [from the spot], he would wash his feet."

As for the version which is merely adequate or sufficient *[mujzi'a]*, it requires the following procedure:

The person must wash his genital organ *[farj]*, make the intention *[niyya]*, and invoke the Name of Allāh [by saying "*Bismi'llāh*"]. Then he must wash his whole body, including in the process the actions of rinsing out the mouth *[maḍmaḍa]* and snuffing water up the nostrils *[istinshāq]*, since both of these are necessary elements in the major purification *[fi'l-kubrā]*.

As far as the minor purification is concerned *[fi'ṣ-ṣughrā]*, we have two conflicting reports of the doctrine *[riwāyatān]*, the sounder version being the one according to which both *[maḍmaḍa* and *istinshāq]* are necessary elements here also.

It is not permissible for someone to pray *[an yuṣalliya]* after performing this kind of ablution, unless he specifically intends it to serve as both the major ablution *[ghusl]* and the minor ablution *[wuḍū']* combined, in which case the rest of the actions proper to the *wuḍū'* will be taken as included in the *ghusl*, by virtue of the intention *[niyya]*. In the absence of the relevant intention, however, the person will not be credited with having performed the *wuḍū'*, and his prayer *[ṣalāt]* will therefore not be valid.

As the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> There can be no ritual prayer for someone who has no minor ritual ablution to his credit *[lā ṣalāta liman lā wuḍū'a lah]*.

This is in contrast to the former case, where the person performed the complete *wuḍū'* in the course of his total ablution.

Extravagance in the use of water is not recommended. Economy is the praiseworthy approach we are urged to take, and using the minimum quantity of water necessary to ensure compliance with the rules of *ghusl* and *wuḍū'* is much better than wasteful excess.

As we know from traditional reports, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to perform the minor ablution *[yatawaḍḍa']* with a single *mudd*, which amounts to one *raṭl* and a third, and he would perform the major ablution *[ightasal]* with one *ṣā'*, which is the equivalent of four *mudd*.[54]

◆

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[54] The *ṣā'* is approximately equivalent to one gallon.

On good manners in relation to clothing.

There are five types of clothing: (1) That which has been declared unlawful *[muḥarram]* for every responsible person *[mukallaf]*.[55] (2) That which has been declared unlawful for certain individuals but not for others. (3) That which is subject to disapproval *[makrūh]*. (4) That which is normally permissible *[mubāḥ]*. (5) That which is to be avoided [under certain circumstances].

1. The type of clothing that has been declared unlawful for every responsible person is that which has been wrongfully acquired by force *[maghṣūb]*.

2. As an example of that which has been declared unlawful for certain individuals but not for others, silk *[ḥarīr]* is permissible *[mubāḥ]* for women, although it is unlawful *[ḥarām]* for mature males. As for whether it is permissible or not for minor boys to wear it, the answer to this question depends on which of two [conflicting] accounts of the traditional doctrine one is to accept.

There are likewise two such reports concerning the permissibility of its being worn by mature men *[bālighūn]* in the course of doing battle with the polytheists *[mushrikūn]* and waging the holy war *[jihād]* against them.

3. What is subject to disapproval is going to extravagant lengths in one's attire, to the point where it amounts to vain conceit and arrogant pride. The same applies to clothing in which the proportions of silk and cotton are such that one cannot tell whether they are half and half or if there is more of one material than of the other.

4. [The permissible type of clothing has been dealt with under the second topic.]

5. As for the type that is to be avoided, this refers to any style or manner of attire that is likely to make a public spectacle of the wearer.

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[55] A *mukallaf* is a sane, legally mature person; someone who is obliged to obey all the rules of Islāmic law and is held responsible for his or her actions.

This could happen, for instance, because it represents a departure from the normal custom of his fellow citizens and his extended family *['ashīra]*. He ought therefore to wear the kind of clothing they wear, instead of adopting a style at variance with theirs, in case people should point their fingers at him and tell tales about him behind his back. By offering a provocation likely to result in their gossiping about him, he would actually share the guilt of the sin of backbiting *[ghība]* committed against him.

◆

On the proper manners to be observed when visiting the mosque *[masjid]*.

When a person wishes to enter the mosque *[masjid]*, he should step forward with his right foot first and then follow with his left foot, saying as he does so:

In the Name of Allāh.	*Bismi'llāh.*
Peace be upon	*as-salāmu 'alā*
the Messenger of Allāh	*Rasūli'llāh*
(Allāh bless him	*(ṣalla'llāhu 'alaihi*
and give him peace!)	*wa sallam).*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
bless Muḥammad	*ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin*
and the family of Muhammad,	*wa 'alā āli Muhammadin*
and forgive me my sins,	*wa'ghfir lī dhunūbī*
and open for me	*wa'ftaḥ lī*
the gates of Your mercy.	*abwāba raḥmatik.*

He should offer the salutation *[yusallim]* to anyone who is present in the mosque, but if there is no one there, he should say:

Peace be upon us from our Lord	*as-salāmu 'alainā min*
(Almighty and Glorious is He).	*Rabbinā ('azza wa jall).*

Once he has come inside, he should not sit down until he has performed two prayer-cycles *[rak'atain]*. Then, if he so wishes, he may perform supererogatory prayers; otherwise he should sit down, either keeping himself occupied with the remembrance *[dhikr]* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), or maintaining a silence unbroken by any mention of worldly affairs.

He should not do a lot of talking, unless it is absolutely necessary for him to speak. If he has entered at the time prescribed for ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, he should perform both the customary *[sunna]* and the obligatory *[farḍ]* prayers together with the congregation *[jamā'a]*.

Then, when he has finished and wishes to leave, he should step outside with his left foot first, to be followed by the right foot.

He should say:

In the Name of Allāh.	*Bismi'llāh—*
Peace be upon	*as-salāmu ʻalā*
the Messenger of Allāh	*Rasūli'llāh*
(Allāh bless him	*(ṣalla'llāhu ʻalaihi*
and give him peace!)	*wa sallam).*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
bless Muḥammad	*ṣalli ʻalā Muḥammadin*
and the family of Muḥammad,	*wa ʻalā āli Muḥammad—*
And forgive me my sins,	*wa'ghfir lī dhunūbī*
and open for me	*wa'ftaḥ lī*
the gates of Your grace.	*abwāba faḍlik.*

◆

On the hundred declarations recommended after the performance of ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

In the wake of every ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, it is considered commendable for the worshipper to glorify *[yusabbiḥ]*[56] Allāh thirty-three times, to praise Him *[yaḥmad]*[57] thirty-three times, to proclaim His Supreme Greatness *[yukabbir]*[58] thirty-three times, and then to complete the hundred with the following declaration:

There is no god but Allāh Alone. No partner has He.	*lā ilāha illa'llāhu Waḥdah.* *lā sharīka lah.*
To Him belongs the kingdom and to Him belongs the praise, and He is Powerful over all things.	*lahu'l-mulku* *wa lahu'l-ḥamd:* *wa Huwa* *'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*

◆

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[56] By exclaiming "Glory to Allāh! *[subḥāna'llāh]*."

[57] By exclaiming "Praise be to Allāh! *[al-ḥamdu li'llāh]*."

[58] By exclaiming "Allāh is Supremely Great! *[Allāhu Akbar]*."

On maintaining a state of purity *[ṭuhūr]* at all times.

It is considered commendable to maintain a constant state of ritual purity *[ṭuhūr]*, for in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> Maintain a constant state of ritual purity throughout your life, and pray *[ṣalli]* by night and by day as often as you can, for then the recording angels *[ḥafaẓa]* will love you.
>
> Perform the prayer in the heat of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*, for it is the prayer of those who frequently repent *[al-awwābīn]*.[59]
>
> Offer the salutation *[sallim]* to the people of your household when you enter your house, for this will increase the welfare of your home.
>
> Treat the elders among the Muslims with solemn reverence, and treat the juniors among them with compassion, for then you will have me as your companion in the Garden [of Paradise].

This *ḥadīth* groups together a whole set of good practices.

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[59] The forenoon prayer *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]* is not one of the five obligatory daily prayers. According to one authority cited by E.W. Lane in his *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. ʾ–W–B, the time for its [optional] performance is "when the young camels feel the heat of the sun from the parched ground."

> Then another came along and said: "Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh and His gracious blessings!" He returned his greeting, the man sat down, and then the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: "Twenty!"—meaning: "[You have earned the merit of] twenty good deeds!"

The recommended custom *[sunna]* is for the person who comes walking by to give the greeting to someone who is sitting down, and for the rider to greet the person who is walking or sitting.

The greeting of one member of a group on behalf of the rest is sufficient, and it is likewise sufficient for a single member of the group to return a greeting.

It is not permissible under any circumstances to take the initiative in greeting a *mushrik* [polytheist; idolater; one who attributes partners to Allāh].

If the *mushrik* takes the initiative, the Muslim should respond to his greeting by saying: "And upon you *[wa 'alaik]*!"

As for one's response to a fellow Muslim, it should be to return his greeting by saying:

And upon you be peace!	*wa 'alaikumu's-salām.*

It is preferable, however, to add the words:

and the mercy of Allāh and His gracious blessings!	*wa raḥmatu'llāhi* *wa barakātuh.*

If a Muslim says to a fellow Muslim [simply]: "Peace *[salām]*!" the latter should not give him a greeting in reply. He should let him know that this is not the proper salutation *[taḥiyya]* of Islām, because it is not a complete statement *[kalām tāmm]*.

It is considered commendable *[yustaḥabb]* for women to give the greeting *[salām]* to one another.

As for a man's offering the greeting to a young woman, this is regarded as reprehensible *[makrūh]*, but if she is an elderly lady *[barza]* there is no objection.

As for giving the greeting to youngsters *[ṣibyān]*, it is recommended *[mustaḥabb]*, because of the contribution it can make to their education in good manners.

It is likewise considered commendable for someone who gets up to leave a meeting *[majlis]* to salute the seated company, and to greet them in a similar manner when he returns to join them. The same applies if

angels will go away and leave him and the devils will come inside with him. They will make everything in his house appear ugly in his eyes. They will cause him to hear talk from his wife that is detrimental to him, to the point where the relationship between him and his wife may entice him away from his religion *[dīn]*. If he happens to be an unmarried man *[aʿzab]*, they will make him feel lethargic and lazy. If he lies down to sleep, he will sleep like a corpse. If he takes a seat [at his table], he will sit there with an appetite for stuff that can do him no good, feeling all out of sorts. They will put him off his food and drink, and keep him from getting a decent sleep.

On earning a livelihood by lawful means *[al-kasb min al-ḥalāl]*.

On the subject of earning a livelihood *[kasb]*, we have a report transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) to the effect that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If anyone seeks to obtain [the goods of] this world by lawful means *[halālan]*, having the decency to refrain from begging, making an effort to provide for his family and out of friendly consideration for his neighbor, Allāh (Exalted is He) will raise him up on the Day of Resurrection with his face as bright as the moon on the night when it is at the full *[lailat al-badr]*.
>
> And if someone tries to obtain [the goods of] this world by lawful means, but wishing to prove himself more affluent than others, to demonstrate his own superiority and to make an impressive display, he will meet Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) on the Day of Resurrection and find that He is very angry with him.

Thābit al-Bannānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"It has come to my notice that well-being is all about ten things, nine of them concerning the quest for a livelihood *[ma'īsha]* and one of them having to do with worship *['ibāda]*."

According to the report transmitted on the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> A man can never give himself an opportunity to go begging, without having Allāh provide him with another opportunity to become destitute. To one who asks for relief, Allāh will grant relief.
>
> If a person can manage [without depending on others], Allāh will make him free from want. That one of you might take a rope, then bring it here to this valley and use it to gather firewood, then go to your market and sell it for a *mudd* [60] of dates—that would be better for him than begging from other people, whether they gave him something or refused to give.

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[60] As a dry measure the *mudd* is equal to two handfuls of grain.

According to another report:

> No man can open for himself one gate of begging without having Allāh open for him seventy gates of poverty.

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is also reported as having said:

> Allāh loves every gainfully employed believer *[mu'min muhtarif]*, the father of a dependent family *['iyāl]*, but He does not love the perfectly healthy idler *[fārigh ṣaḥīḥ]*, not in relation to the work of this world, nor where the work of the hereafter is concerned.

It is related that David *[Dāwūd]*, the Vicegerent *[Khalīfa]* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), asked Allāh (Exalted is He) to let him earn his livelihood by his own hand. [His prayer was answered] with the result that he was able to make iron turn soft in his hand. In his grasp it came to resemble wax or dough. He would mold it to make suits of armor, which he then sold, thus providing an income to support himself and his dependants.

His son Solomon *[Sulaimān]* (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "My Lord, You have given me property the like of which You have never given to anyone before me. I have asked You not to give [the equal of] it to anyone after me, and this You have also granted me. So if I am falling short in gratitude to You, pray show me a servant [of Yours] who is more grateful than I am."

Then Allāh (Exalted is He) told him by way of inspiration *[awḥā ilaih]*: "O Solomon, any servant [of Mine] who earns by his own hand the means to satisfy his hunger, who keeps his private parts *['aura]* concealed from view, and who worships Me, is more grateful to Me than you are." So he said: "Let my earning be with my own hand."

Then Gabriel *[Jibrīl]* (peace be upon him) came to him and taught him the art of weaving the leaves of the date-palm *[khūṣ]*, from which he made wicker baskets *[qufaf]*. Solomon (peace be upon him) was thus the very first person to weave the leaves of the date-palm.

One of the sages *[ḥukamā']* has been quoted as saying: "[The interests of] both religion *[dīn]* and this world *[dunyā]* depend upon four [sets of people], namely the learned scholars *['ulamā']*, the leaders *[umarā']*, the warriors *[ghuzāt]*, and the folk engaged in the business of earning a livelihood *[ahl al-kasb]*."

The leaders *[umarā'*, plural of *amīr]* are the shepherds who take care of the people. The learned scholars *['ulamā'*, plural of *'ālim]* are the heirs of the Prophets *[warathat al-anbiyā']*; they guide their fellow creatures in the direction of the hereafter, and people follow their guidance. The warriors *[ghuzāt*, plural of *ghāzī]* are the army of Allāh (Exalted is He) upon this earth; He uses them to root out the unbelievers *[kuffār*, plural of *kāfir]*. As for the folk who are engaged in the business of earning *[ahl al-kasb]*, they are the trusted agents *[umanā'*, plural of *amīn]* of Allāh (Exalted is He); through them the welfare of the people and the development of the earth [receive the necessary attention].

If the shepherds turn into wolves, who will take care of the sheep and goats? If the scholars abandon the acquisition of knowledge *['ilm]* and become preoccupied with worldly matters, to whom can the people look for guidance? If the warriors ride off in pursuit of boastful glory and vain pride, and if they are motivated by greedy ambition, when will they succeed in conquering the foe? As for the folk engaged in the business of earning, if they cheat people, how can people trust them?

If a businessman does not possess three characteristics, he will do poorly in both this world and the hereafter. The first of these is a tongue unstained by three vices, namely telling lies, talking nonsense and swearing oaths. The second is a pure heart, free from malicious dishonesty and envy toward his neighbor. The third is a nature *[nafs]* disposed to observe three practices, namely [attendance at] the Friday prayer *[jum'a]* and other congregational prayers *[jamā'āt]*, the pursuit of knowledge *[ṭalab al-'ilm]* for a few hours of the night and the day, and giving priority to the approval *[marḍāh]* of Allāh over that of anyone other than Him.

You must beware of unlawful earnings *[al-kasb al-ḥarām]*, for as it has been said: "When the servant [of Allāh] earns something offensive and then, intending to start consuming it, he says: 'In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*,' the devil says: 'Eat away! I was with you when you earned it, so I shall not leave you now. I am indeed your partner *[sharīk]*,' for he is the partner of every unlawful earner *[kāsib ḥarām]*."

As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> And be a partner in their wealth and their children. (17:64)

> Then another came along and said: "Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh and His gracious blessings!" He returned his greeting, the man sat down, and then the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: "Twenty!"—meaning: "[You have earned the merit of] twenty good deeds!"

The recommended custom *[sunna]* is for the person who comes walking by to give the greeting to someone who is sitting down, and for the rider to greet the person who is walking or sitting.

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On living in privacy *[waḥda]*.

On the subject of privacy *[waḥda]* and living in seclusion from the world *[‘uzla]*, it has come down to us that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> You should make a practice of living in seclusion, for this is a form of worship *[‘ibāda]*.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> The most meritorious of human beings is the man who lives in seclusion *[i‘tazala]*, so that other people are safe from his bad influence.

In one of the utterances *[alfāẓ]* attributed to him (Allāh bless him and give him peace), he said:

> The stranger in exile *[al-gharīb]* is someone who escapes with his religion *[dīn]*.

One of the venerable forefathers *[salaf]* is reported as having said: "This is the time for people to hold their tongues and stick to their houses." That was Bishr al-Ḥāfī ['Barefoot' Bishr].

Someone asked Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ[61] (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "Why do you choose to live in lonely isolation in a mansion at al-‘Atīq? You have abandoned the popular market-places and the social gatherings of the brethren *[majālis al-ikhwān]*, and have gone into retirement." To this he replied: "I have noticed that your market-places have nothing to offer but silly gossip *[lāghiya]* and your social gatherings nothing but silly games *[lāhiya]*, while I have found that life in seclusion out here can offer healthy well-being *[‘āfiya]*."

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[61] Also called Sa‘d ibn Mālik ibn Wuhaib ibn ‘Abd Manāf ibn Zuhra ibn Kilāb ibn Murra. As the seventh person to embrace Islam, at the age of seventeen, he was one of the oldest of the Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them all) and one of the ten to whom Paradise was promised *[al-‘Ashara'l-Mubashshara]*.

He fought at the side of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in the early battles of Badr and Uhud and in all the subsequent campaigns. When ‘Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) became Caliph, he withdrew from involvement in public life and retired to his estate at al-‘Atīq for the remainder of his days.

Wahb ibn al-Ward (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "I have mingled with people socially for fifty years, but never did I find a man who would forgive me for making a mistake, who would cover for me in a tricky situation, or from whom I could feel safe when his anger was aroused. I never came across anyone who was not motivated by his own whim and passion *[hawā]*."

Ash-Shaʿbī is reported as having said: "People conducted their social relations for a long period of time on the basis of religion *[dīn]*, until religion became a thing of the past. Then they related to one another in accordance with the ideals of chivalry *[murūʾa]*, until chivalry also became a thing of the past. Then they related to one another on terms of modest decency *[ḥayāʾ]*, until modest decency became a thing of the past. Then they took to basing their relationships on hoping for the best while dreading the worst *[ar-raghba wa'r-rahba]*, and I am inclined to believe that future prospects may be even grimmer than this."

Al-Ḥakīm once said: "Worshipful service *[ʿibāda]* has ten parts to it. Nine of them have to do with knowing how to hold your tongue, and one has to do with detachment from the world. I did make an earnest endeavor to accustom myself to observing silence *[ṣamt]*, but I found it quite impossible, so I went for detachment *[ʿuzla]* instead—and the other nine parts were added unto me!"

He also used to say: "There is nothing more cautionary *[awʿaẓ]* than the grave, nothing more consoling *[ānas]* than the Book, and nothing closer to salvation *[aslam]* than solitude *[waḥda]*."

Bishr ibn al-Ḥārith (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "Knowledge *[ʿilm]* ought to be pursued for the purpose of escaping from this world, not as a means to worldly ends."

ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: "Somebody once put the question: 'O Messenger of Allāh, which of our social acquaintances *[julasāʾ]* is the best?' He responded (Allāh bless him and give him peace) by saying: 'Anyone whose outlook helps you to remember Allāh (Exalted is He), whose knowledge reminds you of the hereafter, and whose way of talking serves to increase your own knowledge.'

Mary's son Jesus *[ʿĪsā 'bnu Maryam]* (peace be upon him) used to say: "O you Disciples *[yā maʿshar al-Ḥawāriyyīn]*,[62] endear yourselves to

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) by loathing people who are guilty of sinful disobedience, draw near to Allāh (Exalted is He) by keeping your distance from them, and seek to win His good pleasure by showing your disapproval of them."

If social contact cannot be avoided altogether, it should be with the learned scholars *['ulamā']*, since the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> To sit in the company of the learned is a form of worship *[mujālasatu'l-'ulamā'i 'ibāda]*.
>
> You must make your heart accustomed to the practice of reflection *[tafakkur]*, your body to the practice of patience *[taṣabbur]*, and your eye to the shedding of tears. You must not worry about the means of survival *[rizq]* for tomorrow, for that would be marked on your record as a fault. You must be regular in attendance at the mosques *[masājid]*, for those who frequent the House of Allāh (Exalted is He), they are the People of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).
>
> If someone makes a frequent practice of visiting the mosques, he will benefit from the discovery of a brother who prays for forgiveness [on his behalf], a mercy awaiting [him], a word that points [him] in the right direction and another that steers [him] away from disaster, new knowledge worth acquiring *['ilm mustaṭraf]*, and the renunciation of sins out of love and out of fear.

Even if a person does choose to live a secluded life *[i'tazala]*, however, the extent of that seclusion may not go beyond the limit set by the sacred law *[shar']*, which does not countenance withdrawal *[i'tizāl]* from participation in the Friday prayers *[jum'a]* and other occasions of congregational worship *[jamā'āt]*. It cannot be permissible for him to neglect these altogether, for he could then be charged with having become an unbeliever *[yukfar]* on the grounds of his permanent non-attendance at the Friday congregation, since the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If someone fails to attend the Friday congregation *[jum'a]* on three [consecutive] occasions, without having a valid excuse to offer, Allāh (Exalted is He) will stamp a seal on his heart.

[62] The Arabic lexicographers offer several ingenious interpretations of *al-Ḥawāriyyūn/-īn*, the collective name for the Disciples of Jesus (peace be upon him), which they derive—like the Qur'ānic term for the brides of Paradise (*ḥūr 'īn* : see note [68] on page 92)—from the Arabic root *ḥ–w–r*.

Several authorities assign to the singular form *ḥawārī* the meaning: 'A person who whitens clothes by washing and beating them,' and then explain that its plural form is applied to the disciples of Jesus (peace be upon him) because their trade was to do this. (For yet other explanations, see E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ḥ–W–R*.)

According to A.J. Wensinck (in *SEI*, art. ḤAWĀRĪ, apostle: "The word is borrowed from the Ethiopic, where *ḥawārī* has the same meaning.... The derivations from the Arabic are erroneous...."

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Jābir (may Allāh be well pleased with him), [the Prophet also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace)]:

> You should know that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has made it a religious duty for you to attend the Friday congregational prayer *[iftaraḍa ʿalaikumu'l-jumʿa]*, at this very spot, in this very month, in this very year, until the Day of Resurrection.
>
> If anyone omits it, when he has an Imām [to lead the prayer] whether he be a just leader or a tyrant *[ʿādil au jāʾir]*—either because he regards it as unimportant *[istikhfāfan lahā]* or because he refuses to accept it as an obligation *[juḥūdan lahā]*, Allāh will not put his affairs in order for him, nor will He bring his business to a successful conclusion for him.
>
> No indeed! He will have no ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* to his credit. No indeed! He will have no payment of the alms-due *[zakāt]* to his credit. No indeed! He will have no pilgrimage *[ḥajj]* to his credit. No indeed! He will have no fast *[ṣaum]* to his credit. Unless he repents, for if someone repents, Allāh will relent toward him *[man tāba tāba'llāhu ʿalaih]*.

This is because neglecting it [the duty to attend the Friday congregational prayer] implies an attitude of disdain toward the summoning herald *[munādī]* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), who is alluded to in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> O you who believe! When the call is proclaimed for the prayer on the day of congregation, hasten to the remembrance of Allāh. (62:9)

Anyone who has a scornful attitude toward Allāh (Exalted is He) and His summoning herald, must be guilty of unbelief *[yakfir]*. It is therefore incumbent upon such a person to repent and to renew his commitment to Islām *[ʿalaihi't-tauba wa tajdīdu'l-islām]*. Allāh will relent toward one who repents.

Thus it is clearly impermissible to stay away from the Friday congregational prayer, except with a valid excuse that is recognized as such by the sacred law *[sharʿ]*. As it has been well said: "Avoid involvement with people, but without offending them and without shunning their congregation *[jamāʿa]*."

A man should therefore endeavor to practice detachment *[iʿtizāl]* from other people to the best of his ability, with the exception of those who can be helpful to him where his religion *[dīn]* is concerned, because lying only happens between two, immoral behavior *[fujūr]* only happens between two, murder only happens between two, robbery only happens between two, and salvation *[salāma]* from all that can be found in the practice of detachment.

On the good manners to be observed when traveling *[ādāb as-safar]* and on how to relate to fellow travelers.

When a person is proposing to set out on a journey, a Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* or a military expedition *[ghazw]*, or to move from one house to another, or to go in pursuit of something he needs, he should perform a ritual prayer of two cycles *[yuṣalli rakʿatain]*, then embark on his quest or undertake his move.

In the case of a journey, he should say the following words after completing the two cycles of prayer:

O Allāh, convey a communication that conveys a blessing and forgiveness from You, and a sign of approval.	*Allāhumma* *balligh balāghan* *muballigha khairan* *wa maghfiratan minka* *wa riḍwānā.*
All goodness is in Your hand, and You are Powerful over all things.	*bi-yadika'l-khairu* *wa Anta ʿalā kulli* *shai'in Qadīr.*
O Allāh, You are the Companion on the journey, and the Deputy in charge of the wife, the property and the children (left at home).	*Allāhumma* *Anta'ṣ-Ṣāḥibu fi's-safari* *wa'l-Khalīfatu* *fi'l-ahli wa 'l-māli* *wa'l-wuld.*
O Allāh, make the journey a smooth one for us, and make the distance seem short to us.	*Allāhumma hauwin* *ʿalaina's-safar:* *wa'ṭwi* *ʿanna'l-buʿd.*
O Allāh, I take refuge with You from hardship on the journey, and from trouble on the way home, and from finding that things look bad where the wife, the children and the property are concerned.	*Allāhumma innī* *aʿūdhu bika* *min waʿthā'i's-safar:* *wa ka'ābati'l-* *munqalab:* *wa sū'i'l-manẓari* *fi'l-ahli* *wa'l-waladi* *wa'l-māl.*

The traveler should try to arrange things so that his departure can take place early in the morning on a Thursday, a Saturday or a Monday.

When he is seated firmly and squarely on his riding camel, he should say:

Glory to the One who has	*Subḥāna'lladhī*
made this subservient	*sakhkhara*
for us (to use),	*lanā hādha:*
for we would not have been	*wa mā kunnā*
equal to the task.	*lahu muqrinīn.*
And to our Lord we are	*wa innā ilā Rabbinā*
surely returning. (43:13,14)	*la-munqalibūn.*

When he returns home from his journey, the traveler should perform a ritual prayer of two cycles [*ṣallā rak'atain*]. He should also say:

Returning, repenting,	*ā'ibūna tā'ibūna*
worshipping;	*'ābidūn:*
praising our Lord.	*li-Rabbinā ḥāmidūn.*

[He should do this] because it has been reported that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to do it.

When he sets out on his journey, the traveler should not take on the rôle of leader [*qā'id*] for the people [in the caravan], as long as someone else can be found to lead them. Nor should he undertake to call their attention to inns [*manāzil*] where they may stop to break their journey, as long as there is somebody else available who is qualified to deal with this satisfactorily.

He should make a point of holding his tongue, of providing good companionship [*ṣuḥba*], and of doing many a good turn for his fellow travelers [*ikhwān*]. Let him beware of tittle-tattle [*qīl wa qāl*].

He should not get down [from his camel] onto the road. Nor should he alight at a watering-place, for it is likely to be infested with snakes and wild animals, so he should in fact keep well away from it.

He should not alight on the road to take a rest during the night [*lā yu'arris*], since this is frowned upon.

The proper attitude to going on a journey is best described in the language of spiritual experience [*'alā lisāni'l-ma'rifa*]. The traveler is moving away from his blameworthy characteristics [*awṣāf madhmūma*] in the direction of his praiseworthy attributes [*ṣifāt ḥamīda*], so he must leave his passions [*hawā*] behind, as he sets out to win the approval of his Master [*Maulā*] by correcting any shortcomings in his dutiful devotion [*taqwā*].

The first obligations he must therefore discharge, when he proposes to travel away from his home town, are the following:

- He must placate his adversaries *[khuṣūm]*.
- He must win the approval of his parents and of other senior relatives, such as grandparents *[ajdād]* and maternal aunts *[khālāt]*.
- For the sake of his dependants, he must appoint as his deputy *[yukhallif]* someone who will be responsible for their welfare as long as his journey lasts. Otherwise he must treat them as his traveling companions and take them along with him.

It is important that his journey be undertaken in the same spirit as any deed of pious obedience *[ṭāʿa mina'ṭ-ṭāʿāt]*, such as the Pilgrimage *[ḥajj]*, or visiting [the tomb of] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), or visiting [the tomb of] a Shaikh or any other noble shrine; or as a legitimate activity *[mubāḥ]* like trade *[tijāra]*, or the acquisition of knowledge *[ʿilm]* over and above the mastery of the sciences *[ʿulūm]* concerned with the five fundamentals of religious worship *[al-ʿibādāt al-khams]*.[63]

It is also important for the traveler to relate to his companions on the journey in a good-natured manner and with courteous affability, avoiding confrontation and argumentativeness in all things. He should make every effort to be of service to his companions on the journey, and he should not ask anyone to serve him except in an emergency.

He should always be striving to ensure that he maintains a state of ritual purity *[ṭahāra]* throughout his journey.

The rules of good fellowship *[ādāb aṣ-ṣuḥba]* require the traveler to behave toward his companion in all the following ways:

- Stand by him when he falls sick.
- Give him water to drink when he gets thirsty.
- Treat him gently when he is feeling upset.
- Soothe his nerves when he gets angry.
- Keep watch over him and his baggage while he sleeps.
- Put his needs first when provisions are in short supply.
- Share with him anything that may help him to feel comfortable, instead of keeping it from him for selfish use.

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[63] ***Author's note*:** To acquire knowledge of these [five fundamentals] is an obligatory religious duty *[farīḍa]*, whereas the study of subjects that go beyond them is merely permissible *[mubāḥ]*. There is merit in the latter kind of study, however, and there are those who maintain that it is *farḍ ʿala'l-kifāya* [a collective duty, incumbent on the Islāmic community as a whole, though not on every individual Muslim].

angels will go away and leave him and the devils will come inside with him. They will make everything in his house appear ugly in his eyes. They will cause him to hear talk from his wife that is detrimental to him, to the point where the relationship between him and his wife may entice him away from his religion *[dīn]*. If he happens to be an unmarried man *[aʿzab]*, they will make him feel lethargic and lazy. If he lies down to sleep, he will sleep like a corpse. If he takes a seat [at his table], he will sit there with an appetite for stuff that can do him no good, feeling all out of sorts. They will put him off his food and drink, and keep him from getting a decent sleep.

and from the temptation	*wa min fitnati'l-laili*
of the night and of the day,	*wa'n-nahār:*
and from the sudden event	*wa min ṭāriqi'l-laili*
in the night and the day,	*wa'n-nahār:*
except for a sudden event	*illā ṭāriqan*
that suddenly brings	*yaṭruqu minka*
a blessing from You,	*bi-khair:*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama'r-rāḥimīn.*
And from every animal	*wa min kulli dābbatin*
creature that my Lord is	*Rabbī ākhidhun*
grasping by its forelock.	*bi-nāṣiyatihā.*
"Surely my Lord	*inna Rabbī*
is on a straight path!" (11:56)	*'alā ṣirāṭin mustaqīm.*

Bells *[ajrās*, plural of *jaras]* should not be attached to the animal on which the traveler rides, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> Along with every bell goes a devil *[innahu ma'a kulli jarasin shaiṭān]*.
>
> The angels will not act as an escort for a caravan in which there is a bell.

It is a recommended practice for the traveler to carry a staff *['aṣā]* with him for company, and he should take great care never to be without it. This is based on the report handed down by Maimūn ibn Mihrān, attributing the following statement to Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father): "Keeping a tight hold on the staff is the example set by the Prophets *[sunnatu'l-anbiyā']* and the distinctive mark of the believers *['alāmatu'l-mu'minīn]*."

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "Six virtues are embodied in the staff: (1) The example set by the Prophets. (2) The mode of attire adopted by the righteous *[ziyyu'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn]*. (3) A weapon to use against enemies, meaning the snake, the dog and and other creatures of that sort. (4) A support for the weak. (5) A deterrent for the hypocrites *[raghm al-munāfiqīn]*. (6) Abundant opportunities for doing good deeds."

It is often said that when the believer has his staff in hand, the devil runs away from him. The hypocrite *[munāfiq]* and the person of bad moral character *[fājir]* will also approach him with proper humility. The staff can also serve to mark the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba] for him when he performs his ritual prayers *[idhā ṣallā]*, and as his source of strength when he is otherwise disabled. In fact it has many useful functions.

As Allāh has said in the story of Moses *[Mūsā]* (peace be upon him):

> He said: 'This is my staff on which I lean, and which I use to beat down leaves to feed my sheep, and in which I find yet other uses.' (20:18)

* * *

On the impermissibility of all offensive activities *[mustaqdharāt]* within the precincts of the mosques *[masājid]*.

Activities that are disapproved of inside the mosque include tailoring *[khiyāṭa]* and the stitching of leather *[khirāza]*, as well as buying and selling and similar occupations.

It is considered reprehensible for people to raise their voices, except in remembrance *[dhikr]* of Allāh (Exalted is He).

Hawking and spitting *[nukhāma]* in the mosque *[masjid]* is a sinful offense, in atonement *[kaffāra]* for which the offender must clear up his expectorated phlegm and bury it.

Tazwīq [gilding with an amalgam of quicksilver and gold] and *khalūq* [a scented compound of saffron] are considered unsuitable as decoration for the mosques, but there is no objection to plastering them with gypsum *[tajṣīṣ]* or coating them with clay *[taṭyīn]*.

It is quite inappropriate to treat the mosque as a house or a lodging, except in the case of a visiting stranger *[gharīb]* or a *mu'takif*,[64] because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once lodged a delegation *[wafd]* from the tribe of Banū 'Abd Qais[65] in the mosque.

There is no serious objection to the recitation of poems *[shi'r]* and *qaṣā'id*[66] inside the mosques, as long as they are devoid of stupid nonsense and satire *[hijā']* intended to ridicule the Muslims. The best policy is to treat them as being out of place, however, unless they are expressions of piety *[zuhdiyyāt]*, elegantly composed, profoundly moving *[mushauwiqāt]* and capable of making the listener weep, in which case they may be positively encouraged.

[64] A person who spends part of the fasting month of Ramadān in pious retreat *[i'tikāf]*.

[65] ***Author's note:*** According to another report, the delegation was from the tribe of Thaqīf.

[66] Plural of *qasida*, which is an ode of more than seven or twelve distichs, up to five hundred, with all the distichs rhyming together.

Where recitation is concerned, of course, what is most appropriate of all is reciting the Qur'ān and proclaiming the glory of Allāh *[tasbīḥ]*, because the mosques have been established for the sake of the remembrance of Allāh (Exalted is He) and the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. It is not proper, therefore, to allow anything other than this [to take place within them].

It is reprehensible to carry away particles of earth [from the actual ground] of the mosque. As for the bits of refuse and garbage that accumulate there, it is considered highly commendable to remove such material and there is great merit *[faḍl]* in doing so. It has actually been reported that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) called this the dower *[mahr]*[67] of the brides of Paradise *[al-ḥūr al-'īn]*.[68]

It is also regarded as inappropriate to enable young children *[ṣibyān]* and the insane *[majānīn]* to enter the mosque.

A man who is *junub*[69] may pass through without objection, but a woman experiencing menstruation *[ḥā'iḍ]* is not allowed to do so, because there will always be a risk of soiling the mosque [with her menstrual discharge]. In a case of urgent necessity, the *junub* may be permitted to perform a minor ablution *[yatawaḍḍa']* and then stay inside the mosque until such time as he is able to perform the major ablution *[ghusl]*. Even in a case like this, however, his best course of action is to perform the 'dry ablution' to remove major impurity.[70] Similarly, if the only water to which he can find access is in the well of the mosque, he should perform *tayammum* in order to be in a fit state to gain admission to the well, then, once he has reached it, he should perform a total ablution *[yaghtasil]*.

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[67] The Islamic law of marriage requires the husband, not the wife, to provide the dower (which is an essential element in the marriage contract.)

[68] Literally, according to the Arabic lexicographers, 'women whose eyes are characterized by intense whiteness of the part that is white, and intense blackness of the part that is black,' or, more poetically, 'women with eyes resembling those of the gazelle.' Pickthall translates *wa zawwajnāhum bi-ḥūrin 'īn* (Qur'ān 44:54): 'And We shall wed them unto fair ones with wide, lovely eyes.'

[69] The term *junub* is applied to a man who is in a state of major ritual impurity, by reason of sexual intercourse and discharge of the semen, and who is therefore disqualified from performing a valid ritual prayer *[salāt]* until he has completed a total ablution *[ghusl]*.

[70] For the author's description of *tayammum*, the special procedure for removing ritual impurity by using clean, dry earth or dust, see p. 10 above.

On various forms of vocal expression *[fi'l-aṣwāt]*.

As for the recitation *[inshād]*[71] of poems *[ash'ār]* without the accompaniment of musical instruments *[malāhī]*, it falls into two categories, namely that which is permissible *[mubāḥ]* and that which is forbidden *[maḥẓūr]*. The permissible type is that which contains no trivial nonsense *[sukhf]*, while the forbidden type is that which does contain trivial nonsense.

Where this kind of performance is accompanied by musical instruments, however, it comes into the forbidden category in either case, regardless of whether it is quite devoid of triviality or does have some trivial content. The only difference is that, where trivial content is a factor, the prohibition applies for two reasons.

It is considered reprehensible to perform the recitation *[qirā'a]* of the Qur'ān with modulations of the voice *[alḥān]*, in the style of a minstrel singing songs for entertainment *[aghānī muṭriba]*. The recitation of the Qur'ān must be approached with reverence and a meticulous regard for the integrity of the sacred text. This modulated style is therefore inappropriate, because it is all too likely to result in a departure from the correct pronunciation established by tradition *[ikhrāj al-kalām 'an sunanih]*.[72]

Besides, the fruit of the Qur'ān is the fear of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), the sense of caution inspired by listening to its stern exhortations *[mawā'iẓ]*, the instructive lessons taught by its demonstrated proofs *[barāhīn]*, its stories *[qiṣaṣ]* and its parables *[amthāl]*, and the arousal of yearning for its promise *[wa'd]*—and all of this may be lost if it is made to sound too sweet.

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[71] The style of recitation called *inshād* is virtually a form of chanting.

[72] ***Author's note*** : [Typical mistakes would include] the omission of a prolonged vowel sound *[isqāt al-tūla]* and the substitution of a glottal stop *[hamz]*, the prolongation of a sound that should be pronounced short *[maqsūr]*, the shortening of a sound that should be drawn out *[mamdūd]*, and the assimilation of consonants which ought to be pronounced separately *[idghām al-hurūf]*.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> Those only are believers whose hearts quake when Allāh is mentioned, and when His revelations *[āyāt]* are recited to them, it increases them in faith, and in their Lord they put their trust. (8:2)

He has also said (Exalted is He):

> Will they not therefore ponder the Qur'ān? (4:82 and 47:24).
>
> ...that they may ponder its revelations. (38:29)
>
> When they listen to that which has been revealed to the Messenger *[Rasūl]*, you see their eyes overflow with tears because of their recognition of the Truth *[Ḥaqq]*. (5:83)

Charmingly melodious styles of recitation are not conducive to any of this, which explains why they are viewed with disapproval.

A Muslim should not carry a copy of the Qur'ān *[muṣḥaf]* along with him on a journey into [territory controlled by] people who are hostile to Islām *[ahl al-ḥarb]*,[73] in case they get their hands on it and show little respect for its sacred character.

He must also refrain from listening to the musical performances of foreign women, especially the young ones, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The glorification [of Allāh] is for the menfolk, and the rhythmic clapping of hands is for the womenfolk *[at-tasbīḥu li'r-rijāli wa't-taṣfīqu li'n-nisā']*.

If this can have a disturbing effect on a worshipper *[muṣallī]* in the very act of performing his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, just imagine the impact of poetry, erotic verses *[ghazal]* and all those things that excite the natural urges in people, by mentioning the attributes of lovers and their sweethearts, discussing the intricate details of love and affection, and describing those objects of desire about which the lower self *[nafs]* is always eager to hear. They stir up the listener's instinctive impulses and stimulate his inclination toward forbidden things, so it is not permissible for anyone to listen to them.

Perhaps somebody will say: "I understand them allegorically *['alā ma'ānin]*, so I can listen to them and still be blameless in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He)." If so, we shall call him a liar, because the sacred law *[shar']* makes no such distinction. Had it been permissible for anyone, it would have been permissible for the Prophets *[anbiyā']* (peace be upon them all), and if that were a valid excuse, we would have to declare listening to the singing of female slaves *[qiyān]* permissible for anyone who claimed that it did not excite him, and the drinking of intoxicating liquor *[muskir]* for anyone who claimed that it did not make him intoxicated.

If a person did in fact say: "It is normal for me, whenever I drink wine *[khamr]*, to refrain from anything that is unlawful *[ḥarām]*," he would still not be allowed to drink it. And if he were to say: "It is normal for me to spend time in the company of foreigners, both male[74] and female, and when I am alone with them in private I merely contemplate their beauty," this again would not make it permissible for him to cultivate his habit. More than that, we would call it imperative *[wājib]* that he abandon such behavior altogether, and develop an even greater interest in the contemplation of things that cannot be considered unlawful.

This [specious kind of reasoning] is simply the technique *[ṭarīqa]* adopted by someone who wants to enjoy the unlawful while following the path of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), so he is actually indulging his own whim and passion *[hawā]*. We must not submit *[lā nusallim]* to those who practice this technique, and we should not accord them any respect.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> Tell the believers to lower their gaze and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. (24:30)

If anyone says that gazing directly is purer, he must therefore be accusing the Qur'ān of falsehood.

[Finally, it should be noted that] loud wailing *[nadb]* and lamentation *[niyāḥa]* are frowned upon, whereas shedding tears *[bukā']* in mourning for the dead is not considered reprehensible.

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[73] Literally, 'the people of war.'

[74] It is interesting, from a cultural as well as a linguistic point of view, to note the author's use of the Persian word *mardān* [men] at this point in the Arabic text.

On the duty to honor and respect one's parents *[birr al-wālidain]*.

To treat one's parents with honor and respect is an obligatory duty *[wājib]*. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> [And be good to parents,] whether one of them or both of them attain old age with you. Do not say 'Ugh!,' to them and do not brush them off, but speak to them in gracious words. (17:23)
>
> Consort with them in this world kindly. (31:15)
>
> Give thanks to Me and to your parents. Unto Me is the homeward journey. (31:14)

Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

"If someone starts the day by annoying his parents, he has two doors through which to approach the day ahead of him, both of them opening onto the Fire [of Hell]. And if someone starts the evening by annoying his parents, he has two doors through which to approach the evening ahead of him, both of them opening onto the Fire. If it is only one [parent he annoys], then [he will face only] one [such door]. Even if they abuse him *[wa in ẓalamāhu]*; even if they abuse him; even if they abuse him!"

According to a report that has been handed down to us from 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The approval of the Lord is to be found in the approval of one's parents, and the displeasure of the Lord in the displeasure of one's parents *[riḍa'r-Rabbi fī riḍa'l-wālidaini wa sukhṭu'r-Rabbi fī sukhṭi'l-wālidain]*.

The following incident is also reported in the words of 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

"A man once came to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him

peace) and said: 'I wish to fight in the holy war *[jihād]*.' In answer to the question, 'Are your parents still living?' the man said, 'Yes,' so the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: 'Well then, theirs is the cause for which you must engage in combat!'"

The nature of filial piety *[birr]* is such that it requires all of the following:

1. That you provide in sufficient measure whatever your parents may need.
2. That you keep them out of harm's way.
3. That you treat them with gentle familiarity, as you would treat a little child.
4. That you do not get irritated with them, or with their needs.
5. That you regard service to them as a substitute *[badal]* for many of your supererogatory acts of worship *[nawāfil]*, such as the extra ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* and fasting *[ṣiyām]* you would otherwise be free to perform.
6. That you seek forgiveness [from Allāh] on their behalf, immediately after your ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*.
7. That you make it unnecessary for them to engage in weary toil, or to bear their troubles without support.
8. That you do not raise your own voice above their voices.
9. That you do not go against their wishes in anything, as long as this does not entail any violation of the sacred law *[kharq ash-shar']*.

What is meant by this last point is that obedience to parents cannot go so far as to include the abandonment of obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]*, such as the testimony of Islām *[ḥujjat al-islām]*, the five ritual prayers *[aṣ-ṣalāwāt al-khams]*, payment of the alms-due *[zakāt]*, an act of atonement *[kaffāra]* or the fulfillment of a solemn vow *[nadhr]*. It cannot be stretched to include the committing of any unlawful act *[irtikāb muḥarram]*, in violation of such rules as those that prohibit sexual misconduct *[zinā]*, the drinking of wine *[shurb al-khamr]*, murder *[qatl]*, slanderous accusation *[qadhf]*,[75] and the misappropriation of goods, examples of which are forcible seizure *[ghaṣb]* and theft *[sariqa]*.

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[75] In Islamic law, the term *qadhf* usually refers specifically to an accusation of adultery *[zinā]*, directed against a virtuous man or woman by a person who is unable to produce four reputable witnesses. The penalty incurred by making such an accusation is eighty lashes.

and from the temptation	*wa min fitnati'l-laili*
of the night and of the day,	*wa'n-nahār:*
and from the sudden event	*wa min ṭāriqi'l-laili*
in the night and the day,	*wa'n-nahār:*
except for a sudden event	*illā ṭāriqan*
that suddenly brings	*yaṭruqu minka*
a blessing from You,	*bi-khair:*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama'r-rāḥimīn.*
And from every animal	*wa min kulli dābbatin*
creature that my Lord is	*Rabbī ākhidhun*
grasping by its forelock.	*bi-nāṣiyatihā.*
"Surely my Lord	*inna Rabbī*
is on a straight path!" (11:56)	*'alā ṣirāṭin mustaqīm.*

Bells *[ajrās*, plural of *jaras]* should not be attached to the animal on which the traveler rides, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> Along with every bell goes a devil *[innahu ma'a kulli jarasin shaiṭān]*.
>
> The angels will not act as an escort for a caravan in which there is a bell.

It is a recommended practice for the traveler to carry a staff *['aṣā]* with him for company, and he should take great care never to be without it. This is based on the report handed down by Maimūn ibn Mihrān, attributing the following statement to Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father): "Keeping a tight hold on the staff is the example set by the Prophets *[sunnatu'l-anbiyā']* and the distinctive mark of the believers *['alāmatu'l-mu'minīn]*."

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "Six virtues are embodied in the staff: (1) The example set by the Prophets. (2) The mode of attire adopted by the righteous *[ziyyu'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn]*. (3) A weapon to use against enemies, meaning the snake, the dog and and other creatures of that sort. (4) A support for the weak. (5) A deterrent for the hypocrites *[raghm al-munāfiqīn]*. (6) Abundant opportunities for doing good deeds."

It is often said that when the believer has his staff in hand, the devil runs away from him. The hypocrite *[munāfiq]* and the person of bad moral character *[fājir]* will also approach him with proper humility. The staff can also serve to mark the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba] for subject to [Allāh's] displeasure. You must therefore repent to Allāh (Exalted is He) as soon as your anger has subsided, since you have contravened His commandment in relation to your parents.

4. You must not go away on a journey that is not strictly necessary for you to undertake, except at their command.

5. You must not volunteer to take part in a military campaign, in which you have not been assigned a specific duty, except with their permission.

6. You must not do anything yourself to make them suffer the painful distress of alienation from you. It is even forbidden for any other person to make them feel that they have lost you, since the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> May Allāh damn the person who causes a separation between a mother and her offspring!

7. If you happen to obtain some kind of food or drink, you must regard it as your duty to offer the best part of it to your parents first of all. For such a long time they always put you first! They went hungry themselves and kept you satisfied. They stayed awake at night and let you enjoy a good sleep. You will let this guide you to the right path, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills.

On surnames and personal names *[al-kunā wa'l-asmā']*,[76] some of which are recommended, while others are subject to disapproval.

It is forbidden for a man to give his son both the personal name *[Muḥammad]* and the surname *[Abu'l-Qāsim]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace),[77] although it is permissible for him to give either of these separately from the other.

According to one of two conflicting versions of the doctrine ascribed to Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), he took an unfavorable view of this practice as a whole; in other words, he disapproved of both the combination *[jam']* and the separate application *[ifrād]*. By the other account, however, he considered it permissible in any form.

To prove the permissibility of naming *[tasmiya]* with the personal name *[ism]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) but not with his surname *[kunya]*, we may cite the evidence reported by Anas ibn Mālik and Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), according to whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> You may give my name as a personal name *[sammū bi-'smī]*, but do not give my surname as a surname *[wa lā tukannū bi-kunyatī]*.

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[76] The corresponding singular forms are *kunya* and *ism*. The *kunya* is a surname of relationship, in which the first element may be *Abū* [Father (of)...], or *Umm* [Mother (of)...], or *Ibn* [Son (of)...], or *Bint* [Daughter (of)...].

[77] The printed version of the Arabic text appears to be defective at this point. As it stands, it would mean: "It is forbidden for a person to name *[an yusammiya]* his son and to surname him *[yukannihi*, presumably a misprint for *yukanniyahu]* with the personal name *[ism]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) but not with *[dūna]* his surname *[kunya]*." The seemingly ungrammatical form *yukannihi* may be a clue, suggesting the possible omission of a whole line of text, in the context of which this form would actually be correct.

Evidence to support the permissibility of giving both in combination is provided by a report transmitted from 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), who is quoted as having said: "A woman once came and said to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give himpeace): 'O Messenger of Allāh, I gave birth to a lad, so I named him Muḥammad and gave him the surname Abu'l-Qāsim. Then someone told me that you would disapprove of this.'

"He replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'What can it be that has allowed [the giving of] my personal name *[ismī]* and forbidden [the giving of] my surname *[kunyatī]*?!' (Or: 'What can it be that has forbidden [the giving of] my surname and allowed [the giving of] my personal name?!')"

Certain surnames are considered highly inappropriate, notably Abū Yaḥyā[78] and Abū 'Īsā [Father of Jesus].[79]

It is considered improper for [a master] to give his slaves *['abīd]* such names as *Aflaḥ* [Lucky], *Najāḥ* [Success], *Yasār* [Prosperity], *Nāfi'* [Useful], *Rubbāḥ* [Monkey], *Baraka* [Blessing], *Barra* [Pious], *Ḥazin* [Mournful], and *'Āṣiya* [Disobedient], in view of the report that has come down to us from 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him), stating that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If I live long enough, I shall definitely make you stop naming slaves Yasār, or Baraka, or Rubbāḥ, or Najāḥ, or Aflaḥ.

It is reprehensible to use titles *[alqāb]* and personal names *[asmā']* that are equivalent to the Names of Allāh (Exalted is He), like *Malik al-Mulūk* [King of Kings], *Shāhanshāh*[80] and similar honorifics, although this is the custom of the Persians *[al-Furs]*.

It is also reprehensible to adopt for personal use those names which cannot befit anyone except Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He), such as *Quddūs* [All-Holy], *Ilāh* [Deity], *Khāliq* [Creator], and *Muhaimin* [Universal Guardian].

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[78] Although its literal meaning is 'Father of him who lives,' Abū Yahyā is used ironically as a nickname for the Angel of Death.

[79] In his *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn* (Book 12, on Marriage), Imām al-Ghazālī cites a tradition *[hadīth]* reported by Abū 'Umar at-Tawqānī, according to which a man once adopted the name Abu 'Īsā [Father of Jesus], but the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) objected, saying: "Jesus has no father!"

[80] The Persian counterpart of the Arabic *Malik al-mulūk*.

Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> And yet they ascribe partners to Allāh. Say: 'Name them!' (13:33)

According to the interpretation offered by certain Qur'ānic commentators *[mufassirūn]*, the implied meaning here is: "'Name them with My names, then consider whether this really suits them!'"

It must be considered unlawful *[yuḥarram]* for anyone to call his brother or his slave by a nickname *[laqab]* that person dislikes, because Allāh (Exalted is He) has forbidden this, for He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> And do not insult one another with nicknames *[wa lā tanābazū bi'l-alqāb]*. (49:11)

He has also called it depravity *[fusūq]*.[81]

What is positively recommended is that you call your brother by the names that he likes best.

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[81] In the same verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān (49:11), which continues:

> An evil name is depravity after faith *[bi'sa'l-ismu'l-fusūqu ba'da'l-īmān]*.

On sitting down *[julūs]*: when, where and how it is appropriate.

For a person who gets angry, if he happens to be standing up at the time, the recommended behavior is to sit down; or, if he is already in a sitting position, he should lie down on his side. If he touches cold water, his anger will subside.

This advice is based on the report of al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with him), from whom we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Anger is a live coal, smoldering in the heart of a human being *[ibn Ādam]*. So, whenever one of you happens to this experience this, if he is standing up at the time, let him sit down, and if he is already sitting down, let him adopt a reclining posture.

It is regarded as very impolite for a man to take a seat in the midst of a group of people engaged in private conversation, unless he has their permission to join them, because this was forbidden by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

It is also considered improper to sit partly in the shade and partly in the sun.

Other bad manners include supporting one's weight on the left hand, and dozing off to sleep while in a sitting position.

When a person gets up to leave a gathering at which he has been seated, it is considered commendable for him to utter the following prayer of atonement for [any offense committed during] the session *[kaffārat al-majlis]*:

Glory to You, O Allāh,	*Subḥānaka'llāhumma*
and with Your praise!	*wa bi-ḥamdika*
There is no god but You.	*lā ilāha illā Anta*
Of You I seek forgiveness	*astaghfiruka*
and I repent to You.	*wa atūbu ilaik.*

On the proper attitude to adopt toward fellow Muslims, one's elders and young children.

It is commendable to behave with modest humility *[tawāḍu‘]* toward every single member of the Muslim community *[li-kulli wāḥidin mina'l-muslimīn]*.

It is also commendable to treat the elders with dignified respect *[tawqīr ash-shuyūkh]*.

While it is appropriate to have a sympathetic and tolerant attitude toward young children *[raḥmat al-aṭfāl wa'l-‘afw ‘anhum]*, one must not fail to give them a disciplined education *[ta'dīb]*.

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On the correct procedure to follow when offering a prayer of supplication *[al-adab fi'd-du'ā']*.

The supplicant should hold out his hands, praise Allāh (Exalted is He),[82] and invoke blessings upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).[83] Then he should ask for what he needs. He should not look up toward the heavens in the course of making his supplication.

When he has finished, he should rub his hands over his face, because we know from traditional reports that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> Petition Allāh with the palms of your hands held open *[salu'llāha bi-buṭūni akuffikum]*.

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[82] By saying: "Praise be to Allāh *[al-ḥamdu li'llāh]*!"

[83] By saying, for instance: "O Allāh, bless our Prophet Muhammad and give him peace *[Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā nabiyyinā Muhammadin wa sallim]*."

On the permissibility of invoking protection from evil by reciting the Qurʾān, and of using the Qurʾān and the Most Beautiful Names *[al-Asmāʾ al-Ḥusnā]* as a charm or amulet *[ruqya]*.

It is permissible to invoke protection from evil *[taʿawwudh]* by reciting the Qurʾān, in view of the fact that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

> [And when you recite the Qurʾān,] seek refuge *[fa-'staʿidh]* with Allāh from Satan the accursed. (16:98)
>
> Say: 'I take refuge *[aʿūdhu]* with the Lord of the Daybreak.' (113:1)
>
> Say: 'I take refuge with the Lord of mankind.' (114:1)

As for the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), we know from traditional reports that when he felt something affecting him badly, he would recite the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge *[Muʿawwidhatān]*[84] to himself, and then he would spit. He also used to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

I take refuge with	*aʿūdhu*
Allāh's noble countenance,	*bi-Wajhi'llāhi'l-karīm:*
and with His perfect words,	*wa bi-kalimātihi't-tāmmāt:*
from the evil of that	*min sharri*
which He has created	*mā khalaqa*
and fashioned and made,	*wa dharaʾa wa baraʾ:*
and from every animal	*wa min kulli dābbatin*
creature that my Lord is	*Rabbī ākhidhun*
grasping by its forelock.	*bi-nāṣiyatihā.*

It is likewise permissible to use the Qurʾān and the Most Beautiful Names of Allāh *[al-Asmāʾ al-Ḥusnā]* as an amulet or charm *[ruqya]*,[85] in view of His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

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[84] Sūras 113 and 114, the last in the Qurʾān.

[85] According to the Arabic lexicographers, *ruqya* is a synonym of *ʿūdha* (the latter being derived from the same root as *taʿawwudh* and other related words occurring in this subsection) and it signifies: 'A charm, or spell, either uttered or written, by which a person having an evil affliction, such as fever and epilepsy etc., is charmed.' (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *R–Q–Y* and art. *ʿ–W–DH*.)

> And We reveal of the Qur'ān that which is a healing and a mercy for the believers. (17:82)
>
> This is a Book We have sent down, a blessed one. (6:156)

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> Use a charm to counteract it [the evil eye], for if destiny *[qadar]* has anticipated something, the evil eye *['ain]*[86] will surely have foreseen it too.

He made this remark (Allāh bless him and give him peace) with particular reference to the case of [his grandsons] al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusain (may Allāh be well pleased with them both).

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[86] While the primary signification of the Arabic word *'ain* is *the eye, the organ of sight*, it has a multitude of meanings (forty-seven, according to one of the lexicographers, but exceeding a hundred by the count of another, with seventeen of them occurring in the Qur'ān). In certain contexts, as here, it means *the evil eye*.

On the appropriate words for a Muslim to utter if he happens to see a synagogue *[bīʿa]* or a church *[kanīsa]*.

If a Muslim happens to see a synagogue *[bīʿa]* or a church *[kanīsa]*,[87] or to hear the blowing of a ram's horn *[shabbūr]*[88] or the sounding of a bell *[nāqūs]*,[89] or to notice an assembled congregation of those who attribute partners to Allāh *[mushrikūn]*, be they Jews *[Yahūd]* or Christians *[Naṣārā]*, it is considered commendable for him to say:

I bear witness that there	*ashhadu an lā ilāha*
is no god but Allāh, Alone.	*illa'llāhu Waḥdah.*
No partner has He.	*lā sharīka lah.*
As One God,	*Ilāhan Wāḥidan*
we worship none but Him.	*lā naʿbudu illā iyyāh.*

[It is appropriate to make this particular utterance] because it has been handed down to us from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who also said [of the person who pronounces these words]:

> Allāh will forgive him in a measure equal to the number of the people guilty of ascribing partners to Him *[ahl ash-shirk]*.

[87] Since the author goes on to mention the Jewish *shabbūr* and the Christian *nāqūs*, in that order, it seems probable that he is using *bīʿa* to mean a Jewish synagogue and *kanīsa* to mean a Christian church.

According to some lexicographers, however, the term *bīʿa* applies to a Christian church, and *kanīsa* to a Jewish synagogue. Others say that *kanīsa* may be applied to either of these, or that it means a place of worship used by the followers of any religion other than Islām.

[88] The word *shabbūr* (or *shabūr*) is the arabicized form of the Hebrew *shofar*, the name of a ram's horn that was used in ancient times as a signaling trumpet, and which is still blown in synagogues on Rosh Hashana and at the end of Yom Kippur.

[89] The Arabic word *nāqūs* came to be applied to a bell, particularly the bell of a Christian church or convent. In the earliest days of Islām, however, it referred to a thin oblong piece of wood, which was beaten with a flexible rod called *wabīl*. This, rather than the bell, was used by the Christians of that time as an instrument for notifying the people of the times of prayer. Under the Greek name *simandro*, it was still in use in certain monasteries in the Levant during the first half of the nineteenth century. (See: T. P. Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, art. NAQŪS.)

On what to say when visiting a Muslim patient who is very close to death.

If a person becomes aware, when visiting a fellow Muslim who is seriously ill, that the patient is actually very close to death, he should pronounce the words recommended by the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who said:

> Death is a fearful event , so if someone among you comes to hear of the demise *[wafāt]* of his friend, let him say:

Surely we belong to Allāh, and unto Him we are returning![90]	*innā lillāhi* *wa innā ilaihi rāji'ūn.*
And surely unto our Lord we are reverting![91]	*wa innā ilā Rabbinā* *la-munqalibūn.*
O Allāh, have him recorded in Your presence as one of the doers of good.	*Allāhumma'ktubhu* *'indaka* *fi'l-muḥsinīn.*
And place his record in *'Illiyyūn* (the Uppermost Heaven).[92]	*wa'j'al kitābahu* *fī 'Illiyyīn.*
And recompense his offspring among the later generations.	*wa akhlif 'alā 'aqbihi* *fi'l-ākhirīn.*
And do not deprive us of (our share in) his reward.	*wa lā taḥrimnā* *ajrah.*
And do not subject us to temptation after he has gone.	*wa lā taftinnā* *ba'dah.*

[90] Qur'ān 2:156.

[91] Qur'ān 43:14 (see also 7:125 and 26:50.)

[92] In the words of the Qur'ān:

> The register of the righteous is in *'Illiyyūn*. Ah, what will convey to you what *'Illiyyūn* is? A written record, attested to by those who are brought near [unto their Lord]. (83:18–21).

According to a tradition recorded in *Mishkāt al-Masābīh*:

> The angels follow the soul through each of the heavens, and the angels of one region pass it on to the next until it reaches the seventh heaven, when Allāh (Exalted is He) says: "Record the name of My servant in *'Illiyyūn*, then return him to the earth, that is, to his body which is buried in the earth."

It is also considered commendable [on the part of the visitor] to advise him to repent of all his sins, to abandon all forms of wrongdoing, and to make a bequest [*waṣiyya*] of one third of his estate in favor of any relatives of his—including the paupers among them—who would not otherwise inherit from him.[93]

If he has no such relatives, he should be advised to make bequests in favor of the poor and the needy [in the community at large], for [the upkeep of] the mosques [*masājid*] and bridges [*qanāṭir*], and for other good and pious causes.

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[93] Under the Islamic law of inheritance, certain close relatives of the deceased are automatically entitled to specified shares in his (or her) estate. The power of testamentary disposition [*waṣiyya*] is restricted to a maximum of one third of the testator's estate, and no bequest may be made in favor of any heir who will automatically inherit a prescribed share.

On what to say when laying a corpse to rest in the grave.

While laying a corpse to rest in the grave, one should pronounce the words recommended by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who is reported as having said:

When you lay your dead to rest in the grave, you must say:

In the Name of Allāh,	*Bismi'llāh.*
and exalted be	*wa ʿaliya*
the religious community	*millatu*
of Allāh's Messenger!	*Rasūli'llāh.*

While scattering dust upon the corpse, one should say:

With faith in You	*Īmānan bika*
and belief in Your Messenger,	*wa taṣdīqan bi-Rasūlika*
and with faith in Your	*wa īmānan*
resurrection (of the dead).	*bi-baʿthik.*
This is what Allāh and	*hādha mā waʿada'llāhu*
His Messenger have promised,	*wa Rasūluh.*
and Allāh and His Messenger	*wa ṣadaqa'llāhu*
have spoken the truth.	*wa Rasūluh.*

[These words are appropriate] because they have been handed down to us from ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who also said: "If someone does this, he will be credited with one good deed for every atom of dust."

❦

CHAPTER TWO

Concerning Marriage *[Nikāḥ]*.

One of the rules of good conduct pertaining to marriage *[nikāḥ]* is that a person about to get married *[mutazawwij]* should be taking this step with the solemn intention *[niyya]* of carrying out the commandment of Allāh, as expressed in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> And marry those without spouses among you, and your slaves and maidservants that are righteous. (24:32)[94]
>
> Marry, of the women who seem good to you, two or three or four. (4:3)[95]

In the words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Marry, multiply, for I need you all, even the miscarried fetus, in order to outnumber the [other] religious communities.[96]

These two verses of the Qur'ān *[āyatān]*, together with the Prophetic tradition *[khabar]* cited, should be enough to convince the believer of the strict necessity *[wujūb]* of marriage, in cases where there is no risk of unlawful sexual behavior *[zinā]*, as well as in cases where such risk is actually present.

This point should be removed beyond dispute entirely, because, according to Abū Dāwūd's account of the doctrine of Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal], marriage is a necessary obligation *[wājib]* under any circumstances *['alā'l-iṭlāq]*.

[A person who marries with this correct intention] will therefore be entitled to the spiritual reward *[thawāb]* of one who carries out the commandment of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). He should be firmly convinced, moreover, that he is acting in the interest of safeguarding

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[94] *wa ankiḥu'l-ayāmā minkum wa'ṣ-ṣāliḥīna min 'ibādikum wa imā'ikum.*

[95] *fa-'nkiḥū mā ṭāba lakum mina'n-nisā'i mathnā wa thulātha wa rubā'.*

[96] *tanākaḥū tanāsalū fa-innī mukāthirun bikumu'l-umam—wa-law bi's-suqṭ.*

On the proper attitude to adopt toward fellow Muslims, one's elders and young children.

It is commendable to behave with modest humility *[tawāḍu‘]* toward every single member of the Muslim community *[li-kulli wāḥidin mina'l-muslimīn]*.

It is also commendable to treat the elders with dignified respect *[tawqīr ash-shuyūkh]*.

While it is appropriate to have a sympathetic and tolerant attitude toward young children *[raḥmat al-aṭfāl wa'l-‘afw ‘anhum]*, one must not fail to give them a disciplined education *[ta'dīb]*.

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of the same family, resulting in the severance of those very bonds of kinship *[arḥām]* that we, as Muslims, are commanded to establish and maintain. It is for this reason that the sacred law *[sharʿ]* prohibits a contract of marriage that would result in two sisters becoming co-wives of the same husband.

It is not a good idea for a man to marry a woman with a vicious tongue *[salīṭat al-lisān]*, nor the type who will always be wanting a divorce *[khulʿ]* for no good reason,[101] nor the kind who loves to stir up trouble *[mutawāshima]*.

Once he has actually married a wife, the husband must treat her decently and not cause her any harm. He must not compel her to forgo her dower *[mahr]*[102] in order to obtain a divorce *[khulʿ]* from him. Nor must he insult her by casting aspersions on her father or her mother. If he does abuse her like this, Allāh and His Messenger will be quit of him.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> Treat the womenfolk with kind consideration, for they are captives *[ʿawānin]* at your disposal.[103]

According to one of the traditions *[āthār]*:[104]

> If a man marries a woman with [the contractual promise of a specified] dower *[ṣadāq]*,[105] but is then unwilling to pay it over to her, he will arrive at the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]* as a person guilty of adultery or fornication *[zānī]*.

If a woman subjects her husband to verbal abuse, to the point of violating his religion *[dīn]*, it is then up to him to decide which of the following courses of action he should take: He may purchase his freedom[106] from her, or he may entrust his situation to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) and humbly pray to Him in supplication *[duʿāʾ]*, in which case He will surely provide all the protection he needs. If he can persevere in this latter course, he will be like the warrior *[mujāhid]* in Allāh's cause.

If his wife is happy to offer him something out of her own property, with no element of coercion on his part, he should accept it and feel free to use it as he may see fit.

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[101] The word used to designate this type of woman is *mukhtaliʿa*, a participle derived from the same root letters (*kh-l-ʿ*) as *khulʿ*, which is the legal term for a form of divorce whereby the wife redeems herself from the marriage for a consideration.

[102] See note [67] on p. 92 above.

[103] ***Author's note:*** In other words, they are prisoners *[usarāʾ]*.

[104] The term *athar* (of which *āthār* is the plural form) is sometimes applied to a report of something said or done by the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace), but it often means a tradition that can only be traced with certainty to one or more of his Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them all.)

[105] The term *ṣadāq* (or *ṣidāq*) is a synonym of *mahr*.

On the correct procedure to follow when offering a prayer of supplication *[al-adab fi'd-du'ā']*.

The supplicant should hold out his hands, praise Allāh (Exalted is He),[82] and invoke blessings upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).[83] Then he should ask for what he needs. He should not look up toward the heavens in the course of making his supplication.

When he has finished, he should rub his hands over his face, because we know from traditional reports that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> Petition Allāh with the palms of your hands held open *[salu'llāha bi-buṭūni akuffikum]*.

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[82] By saying: "Praise be to Allāh *[al-ḥamdu li'llāh]*!"

[83] By saying, for instance: "O Allāh, bless our Prophet Muhammad and give him peace *[Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā nabiyyinā Muhammadin wa sallim]*."

Jābir ibn ʿAbdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once told us: 'If it is possible for anyone amongst you, when he proposes to a woman, to look and see for himself whether he really finds her attractive enough to want to marry her, he should certainly do so. I had proposed to a young woman, so I took to hiding myself and watching out for her, until I saw enough of her to make me really interested in marrying her."[110]

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[110] ***Author's note:*** This is mentioned by Abū Dāwūd in his *Sunan* [collection of traditions].

On the essential elements *[arkān]*, necessary elements *[wājibāt]* and recommended observances *[masnūnāt]*of the Visitation *[ʿUmra]*.

As for the Visitation *[ʿUmra]*, its essential elements *[arkān]* are three in number:

1. The state of consecration *[iḥrām]*.
2. The circumambulation of the House *[ṭawāf al-Bait]*.
3. The *saʿy* [rapid pace] between aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwa.

It has only one necessary element *[wājib]*, namely the shaving [of the head].

Its recommended observances *[sunan]* are:

1. The major ablution *[ghusl]* when entering the state of consecration *[iḥrām]*.
2. The supplications *[adʿiya]*.
3. The invocations recommended by the sacred law *[adhkār mashrūʿa]* during the circumambulation and the *saʿy*.

The rules governing omissions are as we have explained them in connection with the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*.

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On the respective merits of husbands and wives, and on their respective rights and duties.

Let us now consider the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> So now have intercourse with them, and seek what Allāh has prescribed for you. (2:187)[112]

Most of the Qur'ānic commentators *[mufassirūn]* have interpreted the intercourse *[mubāshara]* referred to here as meaning sexual intercourse *[jimā']*, and the seeking *[ibtighā']* as being for children; in other words: "Try to obtain children by having intercourse [with your wives]."

It is likewise important that the woman should engage in this with the intention of preserving her chastity *[taḥṣīn farjihā]*, producing children, and earning abundant spiritual reward in the sight of Allāh, by exercising patience with her husband and throughout the process of pregnancy and childbirth, and then in the upbringing of the children. The importance of all this is made very clear in the following traditional report:

According to Ziyād ibn Maimūn, Anas (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said:

"A woman commonly known as Squint-Eyes *[al-Ḥawlā']*, a perfume vendor *['aṭṭāra]* from Medina, once paid a visit to 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), to whom she said: 'O Mother of the Believers *[Umm al-Mu'minīn]*, my husband is so and so. I make myself beautiful for him every night, and I perfume myself as if I were his newly wedded bride. Then, when he goes to his bed to rest, I get in beside him under his blanket, seeking to earn the approval of Allāh (Exalted is He) by so doing. But my husband turns his face away from me, and it seems to me that he must hate me.' 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) then said: 'Sit here until Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) comes in.'

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[112] *fa-'l-āna bāshirūhunna wa'btaghū mā kataba'llāhu lakum.*

"'While I was sitting there,' said the woman, 'in came Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and he said: "What is this scent I can smell? Squint-Eyes must have paid you a visit! Did you buy something from her?" "No, by Allāh, O Messenger of Allāh," replied 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).'

"Then Squint-Eyes told her story again, so Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said to her: 'Go and attend to your husband and obey him!' She said: 'I do just that, O Messenger of Allāh, but what is my reward?' He then said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Whenever a woman takes something away from her husband's house and disposes of it, wishing to effect an improvement by so doing, Allāh (Exalted is He) records a good deed to her credit, erases a bad deed from her balance sheet, and promotes her to a higher spiritual level.
>
> Whenever a woman becomes pregnant by her husband and bears his child, her spiritual reward is equal to that of the man who stays awake all night in prayer, of the man who fasts all day long, and of the warrior [*ghāzī*] in the cause of Allāh (Exalted is He).
>
> Whenever a woman experiences labor pains, for every pain [*ṭalqa*] she is credited with the emancipation of a living soul [*nasama*], for every act of suckling [*raḍ'a*] she is credited with the manumission of a slave [*raqaba*], and then, when she weans her child, an angelic voice calls out to her [*nādāhā munādin*] from the heavens:
>
> "O woman, you have satisfactorily completed the task in the time that has gone by, so set about the task anew in the time that still remains!""

"'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) then said: 'The women seem to have been given a lot, so what about all you menfolk?' Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) laughed at this, and then he went on to say:

> Whenever a man takes his wife seductively by the hand, Allāh (Exalted is He) records a good deed to his credit. When he hugs her, [he is credited with] ten good deeds. When he has sexual intercourse with her [*idhā atāhā*], it is worth more than this world and all that it contains.
>
> Then, when he gets up to perform a complete ablution, the water does not reach a hair of his body without a good deed being recorded in his favor, a bad deed being erased from his balance sheet, and promotion to a higher spiritual level being awarded to him.
>
> What he receives for his total ablution [*ghusl*] is worth more than this world and all that it contains. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will commend him to the angels in glowing terms, saying:

> "Just look at My servant! He got up in the middle of a chilly night to remove his ritual impurity *[janāba]* by taking a bath. He must be surely convinced that I am his Lord. Bear witness, all of you, to the fact that I have forgiven him!'"'

According to al-Mubārak ibn Fuḍāla, [the Prophet's grandson] al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> You must treat the womenfolk with kind consideration, for they are captives *['awānin]* at your disposal.[113] They have nothing they can call their own. You hold them only by virtue of the trust *[amāna]* of Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He), and it is only because of the word of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) that you can claim lawful access *[istaḥlaltum]* to their genital organs.

According to another report, from 'Ubāda ibn Kathīr on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh al-Jarīrī, it was Maimūna, the wife of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The best of the men in my Community *[Ummatī]* are those who are the best to their wives, and the best of the women in my Community are those who are the best to their husbands.
>
> In the credit account of every woman among them, every day and night, there is filed the reward of a thousand martyrs, slain while fighting patiently and self-sacrificingly in the cause of Allāh. The superiority of any such woman over the maidens of Paradise *[al-ḥūr al-'īn]*[114] is comparable to the superiority of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) over the most inferior man amongst you.
>
> The best woman of all in my Community is she who seeks to delight her husband in everything that gives him pleasure, as long as it involves no disobedience to Allāh (Exalted is He). The best man of all in my Community is he who treats his wife as tenderly as a mother would treat her child. To the credit of every such man, every day and night, there is recorded the reward of a hundred martyrs, slain while fighting patiently and self-sacrificingly in the cause of Allāh.

When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) heard this, he exclaimed: "O Messenger of Allāh, how can it be that the woman is credited with the reward of a thousand martyrs, while the man gets only that of a hundred martyrs?"

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied:

> Surely you must have realized by now that the woman is entitled to a vastly greater recompense, and to a far superior spiritual reward, since Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) promotes the man to higher spiritual levels

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[113] At this point in the text, in order to explain the uncommon word *'awānin*, the author interpolates the note: 'In other words, they are held as prisoners *[ma'sūrāt]*.'

[114] See note [68] above.

> in the Garden [of Paradise], above and beyond his personal level of attainment, because of his wife's approval of him and in response to her prayer of supplication [*duʿā'*] on his behalf?
>
> Surely you must have realized by now that the most serious sinful offense [*wizr*], after the attribution of partners to Allāh [*shirk bi'llāh*], is that committed by a wife when she disobeys her husband?
>
> You must be very conscious of your duty to Allāh, especially where the two weaklings are concerned, because Allāh will hold you responsible for them both, namely the orphan and the woman. If someone treats them well, he will attain to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) and earn His good pleasure [*riḍwān*], but if anyone treats them badly, he can be sure of nothing but Allāh's wrath.
>
> The right of the wife over her husband is like my right over you.[115] If someone fails to respect my right, he has failed to respect the right of Allāh. If anyone fails to respect the right of Allāh, he has brought the wrath of Allāh upon himself; the place he is bound for is Hell [*ma'wāhu Jahannam*], and that is a terrible destination!

The following report has been transmitted by Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī from Jābir ibn ʿAbdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), who said:

"Once, while we were in the presence of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who was in the company of a group of his Companions at the time, a woman appeared on the scene. She came forward until she was standing right next to him, then she said: 'Peace be upon you [*as-salāmu ʿalaik*], O Messenger of Allāh! I have come here to see you as the delegate [*wāfida*] of the womenfolk. There is not one woman who, when she heard the news that I was on my way to visit you, was anything but thrilled at the idea.

"'O Messenger of Allāh, surely Allāh (Exalted is He) is the Lord of the menfolk and the Lord of the womenfolk, and Adam is the father of the menfolk and the father of the womenfolk, while Eve [*Ḥawwā'*] is the mother of the menfolk and the mother of the womenfolk. Well now, when the men go forth to fight in the cause of Allāh, and are slain, they are actually [not dead but] "living in the presence of their Lord, receiving sustenance."[116] If they are wounded, they are entitled to a spiritual reward, the extent of which you know. We just sit and wait for them, and serve them, so are we entitled to anything at all in the way of a reward?'

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[115] *ḥaqqu'z-zawjati ʿalā zawjihā ka-ḥaqqī ʿalaikum.*

[116] *aḥyā'un ʿinda Rabbihim yurzaqūn.* (Qur'ān 3:169)

"To this he responded (Allāh bless him and give him peace) by saying:

> Convey the greeting of peace *[salām]* to the women on my behalf, and say to them: "To obey your husband, and to acknowledge what is due to him as his right *[ḥaqq]*, is in fact equal in value to all of that. But very few of you do it!"

We have it on the authority of Thābit that Anas (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said:

"When the women sent me as their representative to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), they asked me to say on their behalf: 'O Messenger of Allāh, the menfolk have carried off all the merit, especially for doing battle *[jihād]* in the cause of Allāh, so what worthy task *['amal]* is there for us to perform, by which we could match the worthy task of those warriors *[mujāhidūn]* in the cause of Allāh?'

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded to this by saying:

> The housework done by any one of you women, in her own home, is equal to the worthy task of those warriors in the cause of Allāh."

'Imrān ibn Ḥuṣain (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was once asked: 'Is there a form of holy war *[jihād]* incumbent on the womenfolk?' He replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Yes! Their holy war is the struggle to preserve their virtue. They must wage this war against their own lower selves *[yujāhidna anfusahunna]*. If they persevere with patience, they qualify as female warriors *[mujāhidāt]*, and then, if they are considered fit for the job, they become female guardians of the frontiers *[murābiṭāt]* and they are entitled to two rewards."

It is therefore important for both spouses to be firmly convinced of the reality of the spiritual reward *[thawāb]* referred to in this tradition *[ḥadīth]*, as well as in those cited previously, at the time of the marriage contract *['inda'l-'aqd]* and throughout their subsequent conjugal relationship *[jimā']*. Each must faithfully discharge the duty owed *[al-ḥaqq al-wājib]* to the other, in accordance with His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> And they [the women] have rights similar to those [of the men] over them *[wa lahunna mithlu'lladhī 'alaihinna]*. (2:228)

[This is required of them] so that they may both be obedient to Allāh (Exalted is He) and may both be in compliance with His commandment.

The wife should be firmly convinced that this is better for her than fighting the holy war *[jihād]* and going on campaign *[ghazw]*, since Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> There is nothing better for a woman than her husband or a grave.

He once said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Wretched, wretched, wretched is a man who does not have a wife!

When someone asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, is this true even if he is rich in terms of material wealth?" he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Even if he is rich in terms of material wealth.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Wretched, wretched, wretched is a woman who does not have a husband!

When someone asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, is this true even if she is rich in terms of material wealth?" he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Even if she is rich in terms of material wealth.

◆

On the best days of the week, and the best time of day, for concluding the contract of marriage.

The recommended practice is to conclude the marriage contract *['aqd]* on a Friday or a Thursday, and it is more appropriate to hold the ceremony in the evening, rather than in the early part of the day.

⁂

On various arrangements connected with the marriage ceremony.

1. It is established as a traditional custom that the sermon *[khuṭba]* should precede the exchange of marriage vows *[tawājub]*, although it is permissible for it to be postponed till afterwards.

2. The bridegroom has the option, either to participate in person in the legal formalities by which the marriage is contracted, or to appoint someone else to act as his agent.

3. As soon as the contract has been concluded *[inʿaqada'l-ʿaqd]*, it is considered commendable for those in attendance to say:

May Allāh bless you	*bāraka'llāhu*
(the groom), and may He	*laka*
bestow His blessing	*wa bāraka*
upon you (the bride), and	*ʿalaiki*
may He unite the pair of you	*wa jamaʿa bainakumā*
in goodness and well-being!	*fī khairin wa ʿāfiya.*

4. If the bride and her family then request a period of delay [before she is led in procession to her husband's chamber], it is considered appropriate for him to accede to their request. In the interval agreed upon, she will have time to set her affairs in order and attend to her needs, such as purchasing her trousseau *[jahāz]* and making herself look beautiful.

A detailed description of the actual wedding ceremony.[117]

The wedding can take place only when all the preconditions laid down by the Islamic law of marriage *[sharā'iṭ an-nikāḥ]* have been completely fulfilled. In other words, it is necessary to establish the following:

1. That the bride is represented by the legally qualified marriage guardian *[al-waliyy al-'adl]*.
2. That the legally qualified witnesses *[ash-shuhūd al-'adl]* are present.
3. The suitability of the proposed match *[al-kafā'a]*.
4. The absence of any impediment, such as apostasy from Islām *[ar-ridda]*, the fact that the woman concerned is a widow or divorcée who has not yet completed the prescribed period of waiting *[al-'idda]*,[118] or any other such obstacle.

Provided all these preconditions have been met, the person who is legally competent to contract the marriage *[al-'āqid li'n-nikāḥ]* must now ask the woman for her consent, if she is not one who can be given in marriage even without her explicit consent *[mujbara]*. [If her explicit consent is required,] this means that she is either a non-virgin *[thayyib]* or a virgin *[bikr]* who has no father.

The husband-to-be must inform the bride of the amount of the dower *[ṣadāq]* and the nature of it, then he may deliver the sermon *[khuṭba]* and invoke the forgiveness of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

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[117] For the convenience of the reader, the editors have taken the liberty of moving this and the following subsection forward from their position in the orginal Arabic text, where they are supplied (in reverse order) as postscripts to the section on the rules of good conduct pertaining to marriage *[ādāb an-nikāḥ]*.

[118] In the case of a divorced woman who is not pregnant, the prescribed period of waiting *['idda]*, before the expiration of which she may not contract a new marriage, is three menstrual cycles. In the case of a woman who is pregnant, the duration of the *'idda* is till the end of her pregnancy. In the case of a widow who is not pregnant, the length of the *'idda* is four months and ten nights.

The most appropriate course for him to take, however, is to instruct the marriage guardian *[walī]* to do this on his behalf, in accordance with the recommended practice *['alā wajhi'l-istiḥbāb]*.

Next, the guardian must elicit the bridegroom's response to the statement: "I have given you in marriage *[zawwajtuka]* my daughter (or my sister) so-and-so (mentioning her actual name), on the understanding that the dower *[ṣadāq]* shall be... (specifying the amount that has been mutually agreed upon.)"

The bridegroom will respond to this by saying: "I have already accepted this marriage *[qad qabiltu hādha'n-nikāḥ]*."

The marriage can only be contracted in Arabic *[bi'l-'arabiyya]*, at least when the person concerned has a sufficient mastery of that language. If he does not know Arabic well enough, he may use his own language *[lisān]* and dialect *[lugha]*. Should he or should he not be obliged to study the Arabic language, if he has not already mastered it sufficiently for the purpose of contracting the marriage? The answer to this question depends on which of two conflicting schools of opinion one chooses to follow.

It is strongly recommended that the religious address delivered on the occasion should be the sermon *[khuṭba]* of 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him), since it has been reported of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal that, if he ever witnessed a contract of marriage, but did not hear the *khuṭba* of 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd, he would cease to participate in the ceremony and would get up and leave.

This information was imparted to us by Shaikh Imām Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak ibn Mūsā as-Saqaṭī, in Baghdād, on the authority of al-Qāḍī [Judge] Abū 'Umar al-Qāsim ibn Ja'far ibn 'Abd al-Wāḥid al-Hāshimī al-Baṣrī, on the authority of Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Lu'lu'ī, on the authority of Abū Dāwūd.

He also said: "Muḥammad ibn Sulaimān al-Anbārī al-Ma'nī told us: 'We heard from Wakī', on the authority of Isrāfīl, on the authority of Abū Isḥāq, on the authority of Abu'l-Aḥwaṣ, on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida, that 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said: "It was Allāh's Messenger himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who taught us the marriage sermon *[khuṭbat an-nikāḥ]*."'"

[The words of this sermon are as follows:]

Praise be to Allāh!	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*
We praise Him and we	*naḥmiduhu*
seek His help and we	*wa nastaʿīnuhu*
beg His forgiveness.	*wa nastaghfiruh.*
And we take refuge with Allāh	*wa naʿūdhu bi-'llāhi*
from the evils	*min shurūri*
of our own lower selves,	*anfusinā*
and from the bad effects	*wa min sayyi'āti*
of our own actions.	*aʿmālinā.*
When Allāh guides a person,	*man yahdi'llāhu*
no one can lead him astray,	*fa-lā muḍilla lah:*
and when Allāh allows a person	*wa man yuḍlilhu*
to go astray, no one can	*fa-lā hādiya lah.*
guide him aright.	
And I bear witness that	*wa ashhadu an*
there is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa'llāh.*
and I bear witness that	*wa ashhadu anna*
Muḥammad is His servant	*Muḥammadan ʿabduhu*
and His Messenger.	*wa Rasūluh.*
"O human beings! Be careful	*yā ayyuha'n-nāsu'ttaqū*
of your duty to your Lord,	*Rabbakumu'lladhī*
who created you all,	*khalaqakum*
from one single soul,	*min nafsin wāḥidatin*
and from it created its mate,	*wa khalaqa minhā zawjahā*
and from the pair of them	*wa baththa minhumā*
has spread abroad a multitude	*rijālan kathīran*
of men and women.	*wa nisā'ā.*
And be careful of your duty	*wa'ttaqu'llāha'lladhī*
toward Allāh, through whom	*tasā'alūna bihi*
you make claims on one another,	
and toward the wombs	*wa'l-arḥām.*
(that bore you).	
Surely Allāh is ever Watchful	*inna'llāha kāna*
over you." (4:1)	*ʿalaikum Raqībā.*
"O you who believe!	*yā ayyuha'lladhīna*
Be careful of your duty to Allāh,	*āmanu'ttaqu'llāha*
and speak words that go	*wa qūlū qawlan*
straight to the point, then	*sadīdā:*
He will correct your actions	*yuṣliḥ lakum aʿmālakum*
for you, and He will forgive	*wa yaghfir lakum*
you your sins.	*dhunūbakum.*
Whoever obeys Allāh	*wa man yuṭiʿi'llāha*
and His Messenger	*wa Rasūlahu*

has indeed achieved	*fa-qad fāza*
a mighty triumph." (33:70,71)	*fauzan ʿaẓīmā.*

In addition to the above, it is considered commendable to recite the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

"And marry those without	*wa ankiḥu'l-ayāmā*
spouses among you,	*minkum*
and your slaves and	*wa'ṣ-ṣāliḥīna min*
maidservants that are righteous.	*ʿibādikum wa imā'ikum.*
If they are poor,	*in yakūnū fuqarā'a*
Allāh will enrich them	*yughnihimu'llāhu*
of His bounty.	*min faḍlih.*
Allāh is All-Embracing,	*wa'llāhu Wāsiʿun*
All-Knowing."[119]	*ʿAlīm.*
"He bestows blessings on	*yarzuqu*
whomever He will,	*man yashā'u*
without reckoning."[120]	*bi-ghairi ḥisāb.*

Alternatives to this particular *khuṭba* are quite permissible. The bridegroom may, for instance, recite the following:

Praise be to Allāh,	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi'l-*
the Sole Owner of His bounties,	*Munfaridi bi-ālā'ihi'l-*
the Most Generous in His giving.	*Jawādi bi-iʿṭā'ihi'lladhī*
Who reveals Himself	*tajallā bi-asmā'ihi'l-*
through His Names,	*Mutawaḥḥidi*
the Unique in His majesty.	*bi-kibriyā'ih.*
Those who attempt to describe	*lā yaṣifuhu'l-wāṣifūna*
Him cannot truly describe Him,	*ḥaqqa ṣifatih.*
and those who try to	*wa lā yanʿatuhu'n-*
characterize Him cannot	*nāʿitūna*
characterize Him truly.	*ḥaqqa naʿtih.*
There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa'llāhu'l-*
the One, the Everlasting,	*Wāḥidu's-Ṣamadu'l-*
the Adored.	*Maʿbūd .*
"There is nothing like	*laisa ka-mithlihi shai':*
unto Him, and He is the	*wa Huwa's-*
All-Hearing, the All-Seeing."[121]	*Samīʿu'l-Baṣīr.*
Blessed is Allāh, the Almighty,	*tabāraka'llāhu'l-ʿAzīzu'l-*
the Ever-Forgiving.	*Ghaffār.*

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[119] Qur'ān 24:32.

[120] Qur'ān 24:38 (also 2:212 and 3:37).

[121] Qur'ān 42:11.

He sent Muḥammad (Allāh	*baʿatha Muḥammadan*
bless him and give him peace)	*(ṣallaʾllāhu ʿalaihi wa*
with the Truth,	*sallam) biʾl-ḥaqq:*
as a Prophet pure and	*nabiyyan ṣafiyyan barīʾan*
innocent of all vices.	*minaʾl-ʿāhāti kullihā.*
And he delivered the message	*wa ballagha mā*
he was sent to deliver,	*ursila bih:*
like a brilliant lamp and	*sirājan zāhiran*
a radiant light	*wa nūran sāṭiʿan*
and a shining proof.	*wa burhānan lāmiʿā.*
May Allāh bestow	*ṣallaʾllāhu ʿalaihi*
His blessings and grant peace	*wa sallama*
to him and to all	*wa ʿalā ālihi*
the members of his family.	*ajmaʿīn.*
Well then, surely these	*thumma inna hādhihiʾl-*
matters are all in Allāh's hand.	*umūra kullahā bi-yadiʾllāhi*
He causes them to flow	*yuṣarrifuhā*
in their proper channels,	*fī ṭarāʾiqihā*
and He makes them follow	*wa yumaḍḍīhā*
their right courses.	*fī ḥaqāʾiqihā.*
No one can bring forward	*lā muqaddima*
that which He has postponed,	*li-mā akhkhara*
and no one can put back	*wa lā muʾakhkhira*
what He has brought to the fore.	*li-mā qaddama.*
No couple can be joined	*wa lā yajtamiʿuʾthnāni*
together except by His	*illā bi-qaḍāʾihi*
judgment and His decree.	*wa qadarih.*
For every judgment	*wa li-kulli qaḍāʾin*
there is a decree,	*qadarun*
and for every decree	*wa li-kulli qadarin*
there is an appointed time,	*ajalun*
and "for every appointed time	*wa li-kulli ajalin*
there is a written record."[122]	*kitāb.*
"Allāh erases what He will,	*yamḥuʾllāhu mā yashāʾu*
and He fixes (what He will),	*wa yuthbitu*
and with Him is the	*wa ʿindahu*
Essence of the Book."[123]	*ummuʾl-kitāb.*
It was in accordance with	*wa kāna min*
the judgment of Allāh	*qaḍāʾiʾllāhi*
and His decree,	*wa qadarihi*
that So-and-So, the son of	*an yakhṭuba*
So-and-So, should offer	*Fulānuʾbnu Fulān*

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[122] Qur'ān 13:38 (these two lines only, excluding the initial word 'and *[wa]*.')

[123] Qur'ān 13:39.

a proposal of marriage to your precious So-and-So, the daughter of So-and-So.	*karīmatakum* *Fulānata* *bint Fulān.*
He therefore came to you as a suitor, proposing to marry your precious relative, and offered her the dower on which agreement was reached.	*wa qad atākum* *rāghiban fīkum* *khāṭiban karīmatakum:* *wa qad badhala lahā* *mina'ṣ-ṣadāqi* *mā waqaʿa ʿalaihi'l-ittifāq.*
So wed (her to) him who proposes to you, and marry (her to) your suitor!	*fa-zawwijū* *khāṭibakum wa ankiḥū* *rāghibakum.*
Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:	*qāla'llāhu (taʿālā):*
"And marry those without spouses among you, and your slaves and maidservants that are righteous.	*wa ankiḥu'l-* *ayāmā minkum* *wa'ṣ-ṣāliḥīna min* *ʿibādikum wa imā'ikum.*
If they are poor, Allāh will enrich them of His bounty.	*in yakūnū fuqarā'a* *yughnihimu'llāhu* *min faḍlih.*
Allāh is All-Embracing, All-Knowing." (24:32)	*wa'llāhu Wāsiʿun* *ʿAlīm.*

As soon as the sermon has been delivered, the marriage should be contracted in the manner we have already described.

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On the recommended customs to be observed in connection with the wedding feast *[walīmat al-ʿurs]*.[124]

The holding of a wedding feast *[walīmat al-ʿurs]* is strongly recommended. To conform to the custom sanctioned by tradition *[sunna]*, the banquet should consist of one whole sheep, at the very least, although it is permissible to offer any kind of [lawful] food on this occasion.

If the invited guest is a Muslim, his strict duty requires him to respond to the invitation on the first day. To respond on the second day is considered commendable, and it is barely permissible *[mubāḥ]* to do so on the third day, although such conduct would show a meanness of spirit.

These statements are based on the following traditions:

1. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said to ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> Offer a feast to celebrate the wedding, even if it consists of no more than a sheep.[125]

2. He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> [Attendance at] the wedding feast on the first day is a matter of duty *[ḥaqq]*; on the second, it is a matter of courteous behavior *[maʿrūf]*; later than that, it shows a meanness of spirit.

3. According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If one of you receives an invitation to attend a wedding banquet, he must accept [and put in an appearance]. Then, if he is feeling hungry, he should eat, unless he is fasting, in which case he may abstain and take his leave.

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[124] See note [117] above.

[125] *awlim wa-law bi-shāt*. The Arabic verb *awlama* means 'he provided a wedding banquet *[walīma]*.'

Jābir ibn ʿAbdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once told us: 'If it is possible for anyone amongst you, when he proposes to a woman, to look and see for himself whether he really finds her attractive enough to want to marry her, he should certainly do so.' I had proposed to a young woman, so I took to hiding myself and watching out for her, until I saw enough of her to make me really interested in marrying her."[110]

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[110] **Author's note:** This is mentioned by Abū Dāwūd in his *Sunan* [collection of traditions].

On what the bridegroom should say when the bride is conducted to his chamber, and when the marriage is consummated.

When the bride is conducted to his chamber [*zuffat ilaih*], the bridegroom should follow the advice given by ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Masʿūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) to a man who once came to him and said: "I have married a young woman, a virgin, and now I am afraid that she may dislike me or even hate me [*tafrakanī*]."[126] His advice was as follows:

"Affection [*ilf*] is from Allāh and hatred [*firk*] is from the devil. When she comes into your room, you must command her to take her place behind you in order to perform two cycles of ritual prayer [*an tuṣalliya khalfaka rakʿatain*]. You must also say:

O Allāh, let my family be a blessing to me, and let me be a blessing to my family.	*Allāhumma* *bārik lī fī ahlī* *wa bārik* *li-ahlī fiyy.*
O Allāh, let me derive benefit from them, and let them derive benefit from me.	*Allāhumma'rzuqnī* *minhum* *wa'rzuqhum minnī.*
O Allāh, unite us—when You do unite—in something good, and set us apart—when You do set apart—in the direction of something good!	*Allāhumma'jmaʿ bainanā* *idhā jamaʿta fī khair:* *wa farriq bainanā* *idhā farraqta* *ilā khair.*

"When the husband is ready to engage in sexual intercourse [*jimāʿ*], he should say:

In the Name of Allāh, the All-High, the Sublime.	*Bismi'llāhi'l-* *ʿAliyyi'l-ʿAẓīm.*

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[126] According to the Arabic lexicographers, the verb *farika* (like the verbal noun *firk*) relates peculiarly to the feeling of hatred between husband and wife, and then most often with the wife as the subject and the husband as the object.

O Allāh, let it be	*Allāhumma'j'alhā*
a good offspring,	*dhurriyyatan ṭayyibatan*
if You have decreed that one	*in kunta qaddarta*
should issue from my loins.	*an takhruja min ṣalbī.*
O Allāh, keep the devil away	*Allāhumma*
away from me, and keep the	*jannibni'sh-shaiṭān:*
devil away from the blessings	*wa jannibi'sh-shaiṭana*
You have bestowed upon me!	*mā razaqtanī.*

"Then, when he has done what he needed to do:

In the Name of Allāh.	*Bismi'llāh.*
Praise be to Allāh,	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi'lladhī*
'Who created man from	*khalaqa mina'l-mā'i*
water, and appointed for him	*basharan fa-ja'alahu*
kindred by blood and	*nasaban*
kindred by marriage, for	*wa ṣihrā.*
your Lord is ever Powerful.'[127]	*wa kāna Rabbuka Qadīrā.*

"He should say all this quietly to himself, without moving his lips in the process."

This practice is based on the traditional report handed down to us by Kuraib on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), who stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If one of you says, when he is ready to have intercourse with his wife: 'In the Name of Allāh. O Allāh, keep the devil away from me, and keep the devil away from the blessings You have bestowed upon me,' then, if it has been preordained that a child should come into being between the pair of them during that intercourse, the devil will never cause it any harm.

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[127] Qur'ān 25:54.

On the importance of keeping to strictly a lawful diet, especially in the case of a pregnant woman.

When the symptoms of pregnancy *[ḥabal]* become apparent in a woman, all food that is unlawful *[ḥarām]* or merely dubious *[shubha]* must be rigorously excluded from her diet, so that the child can develop on a foundation to which the devil has no access.

The ideal course would be to follow this regimen from the moment of the wedding *[zifāf]* itself, and to stick to it constantly, in order to ensure the safety of the husband, as well as his wife and his children, from the devil in this world and from the Fire [of Hell] in the life beyond *[al-ʿuqbā]*. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> O you who believe, guard yourselves and your families against a Fire. (66:6)

If this practice is adhered to, the child will turn out to be righteous *[ṣāliḥ]*, dutiful toward his parents and obedient to his Lord. All of this will come about as the blessed result of keeping the diet pure.

◆

On the ablutions that must be performed in the wake of sexual intercourse.

When the husband has finished having sexual intercourse *[jimāʿ]* with his wife, he should withdraw from her and wash off any cause of ritual impurity *[adhā]* that may be clinging to him. He should perform a minor ablution *[yatawaḍḍaʾ]* if he intends to lie with her again, otherwise he must perform a total ablution *[yaghtasil]*. He should not go to sleep while he is in a state of ritual impurity *[junub]*, for that is considered reprehensible.

We have a traditional report from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to the same effect, but with the qualification: "unless this would be very inconvenient for him." [If he does find himself in an extremely awkward situation] due to bitter cold, for instance, or to remoteness from a public steam bath *[ḥammām]* and any source of water, or to a threat of danger, he may therefore sleep until the obstacle no longer stands in his way.

⁂

a proposal of marriage	*karīmatakum*
to your precious So-and-So,	*Fulānata*
the daughter of So-and-So.	*bint Fulān.*
He therefore came to you	*wa qad atākum*
as a suitor, proposing to marry	*rāghiban fīkum*
your precious relative,	*khāṭiban karīmatakum:*
and offered her	*wa qad badhala lahā*
the dower on which	*mina'ṣ-ṣadāqi*
agreement was reached.	*mā waqaʿa ʿalaihi'l-ittifāq.*
So wed (her to) him who	*fa-zawwijū*
proposes to you, and marry	*khāṭibakum wa ankiḥū*
(her to) your suitor!	*rāghibakum.*
Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:	*qāla'llāhu (taʿālā):*
"And marry those without	*wa ankiḥu'l-*
spouses among you,	*ayāmā minkum*
and your slaves and	*wa'ṣ-ṣāliḥīna min*
maidservants that are righteous.	*ʿibādikum wa imāʾikum.*
If they are poor,	*in yakūnū fuqarāʾa*
Allāh will enrich them	*yughnihimu'llāhu*
of His bounty.	*min faḍlih.*
Allāh is All-Embracing,	*wa'llāhu Wāsiʿun*
All-Knowing." (24:32)	*ʿAlīm.*

As soon as the sermon has been delivered, the marriage should be contracted in the manner we have already described.

On the importance of satisfying the sexual needs of one's wife.

The recommended practice is for the husband to indulge in foreplay *[mulā'aba]* with his wife, prior to the act of sexual union, and then to remain attentive to her after he has satisfied his own need, until she has also satisfied her need. Neglecting to provide such attention is tantamout to committing an injurious offense against her, and this all too often results in loathing and separation.

On obtaining the woman's consent before practicing *coitus interruptus [ʿazl]*.

If the man wishes to practice *coitus interruptus [ʿazl]*,[128] he may not do so without his wife's consent, if she is a free woman *[ḥurra]*. If she is a slave concubine *[ama]*, he must obtain the consent of her master *[sayyid]*. If she happens to be his own female slave, on the other hand, it is permissible for him [to practice *ʿazl* when he has sexual intercourse with her] even without her consent, because the right *[ḥaqq]* is then vested in him, not in her.

[According to a traditional report,] a man once came up to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and said: "I have a slave girl *[jāriya]* who works as our servant. I am having sex with her *[aṭūfu ʿalaihā]*, but I would not want to see her get pregnant." To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "Practice *coitus interruptus* with her *[iʿzil ʿanhā]*, if you wish, for whatever destiny has in store for her *[mā quddira lahā]*, it must surely come her way."

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[128] In plain English, the term *ʿazl* means the practice (commonly resorted to as a primitive means of birth-control) of withdrawing the penis prior to ejaculation, so that the emission of semen occurs outside the genital organs of the woman.

On the avoidance of intercourse with a woman during her periods of menstruation *[ḥaiḍ]* and post-natal bleeding *[nifās]*.

Sexual intercourse *[waṭ']* must be avoided as long as the woman concerned is in a state of menstruation *[ḥaiḍ]* or post-natal bleeding *[nifās]*. The same rule applies even after the bleeding has stopped, until she has performed a total ablution; on this point the authorities are in unanimity, at least in the case of menstruation. Where the post-natal period is concerned, sexual abstinence should be observed for a full forty days, [not as an absolute rule, but rather] as a recommended practice.

If the woman cannot find water for her ablution, [intercourse may take place] after she has cleansed herself by performing *tayammum*.[129]

If the man contravenes these rules by having intercourse during the period when it ought to be avoided, he must atone by making a charitable donation *[taṣaddaqa]* of one dīnār or half a dīnār. This is according to one of two accounts of the relevant doctrine *['alā iḥda'r-riwāyatain]*. According to the other version, he must to seek forgiveness from Allāh (Exalted is He) and turn to Him in repentance, promising that he will not make the same mistake again, but he is not required to offer an expiatory donation *[lā yukaffiru]*.

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[129] For the author's description of this practice, see p. 10 above.

On the recommended customs to be observed in connection with the wedding feast *[walīmat al-ʿurs]*.[124]

The holding of a wedding feast *[walīmat al-ʿurs]* is strongly recommended. To conform to the custom sanctioned by tradition *[sunna]*, the banquet should consist of one whole sheep, at the very least, although it is permissible to offer any kind of [lawful] food on this occasion.

If the invited guest is a Muslim, his strict duty requires him to respond to the invitation on the first day. To respond on the second day is considered commendable, and it is barely permissible *[mubāḥ]* to do so on the third day, although such conduct would show a meanness of spirit.

These statements are based on the following traditions:

1. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said to ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> Offer a feast to celebrate the wedding, even if it consists of no more than a sheep.[125]

2. He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> [Attendance at] the wedding feast on the first day is a matter of duty *[ḥaqq]*; on the second, it is a matter of courteous behavior *[maʿrūf]*; later than that, it shows a meanness of spirit.

3. According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If one of you receives an invitation to attend a wedding banquet, he must accept [and put in an appearance]. Then, if he is feeling hungry, he should eat, unless he is fasting, in which case he may abstain and take his leave.

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[124] See note [117] above.

[125] *awlim wa-law bi-shāt*. The Arabic verb *awlama* means 'he provided a wedding banquet *[walīma]*.'

On the circumstances in which a marriage may be dissolved because of the husband's failure to satisfy the considerably greater sexual appetite of the wife.

Even if the husband feels no personal craving for sexual intercourse, it is still not permissible for him to refrain from engaging in it, because this is something to which the wife is entitled as a legal right *[ḥaqq]*.

To give up having sexual intercourse would amount to an injurious offense against the wife, because her appetite for it is far greater than his. Indeed, it has been reported by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> [It would be obvious that] the sexual appetite of the women exceeds that of the men by ninety-nine [percent], were it not for the fact that Allāh (Exalted is He) has imbued them with a sense of modesty.

It has also been said that sexual appetite has ten parts, nine of them belonging to the women and only one belonging to the men.

The maximum period of abstinence, beyond which it is no longer permissible for the husband to put off having sexual intercourse *[waṭ']*, is four months, unless he has a valid excuse. If he goes beyond the four-month limit, therefore, the wife is entitled to demand a legal separation *[firāq]* from him.

If the husband goes off on a journey that takes him away from his wife for a period longer than six months, and she then sends him a message asking him to come home, but he refuses to do so, despite the fact that it would be quite possible for him to return at that point, the judge *[ḥākim]* has the authority to decree a legal separation between them, if this is applied for by the wife.

This is the time limit set by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him), to be observed by the Muslims when they embark on their military campaigns *[maghāzī]*. They should spend one month on their travels and four months at home. Then they may go on off on another expedition, returning to their families in the space of a month.

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On what a man should do if he finds himself attracted to another man's wife.

If a man catches sight of another man's wife, and he finds her very attractive, he should go and have sexual intercourse with his own wife, so that the feeling of desire *[tawaqān]* that has arisen within him will calm down.

This advice comes to us from the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace), for he is reported as having said:

> If one of you men catches sight of a woman who is very attractive to him, let him go and have sexual intercourse with his own wife, for the devil comes forward in the shape of a woman, and he backs off in the shape of a woman.

In the case of a man who has no wife of his own, he must turn to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) for protection, begging Him for salvation from sinful acts of disobedience, and seeking refuge with Him from Satan the accursed *[ash-shaiṭān ar-rajīm]*.

On preserving the confidentiality of shared sexual experience.

It is not permissible for the husband to talk to other men about what goes on between him and his wife in the matter of sexual intercourse *[jimāʿ]*, nor for the wife to talk to other women about this subject. Such behavior is both foolish and demeaning; it is repugnant to the sacred law *[sharʿ]* as well as to common sense *[ʿaql]*.

This is clearly stated in a lengthy tradition *[ḥadīth]* reported by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), which we may cite from the point where he tells us:

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then turned to address the men: 'Is there any man amongst you,' he asked, 'who, when he is about to have sexual intercourse with his wife, makes sure that he has locked his bedroom door, then draws a covering over himself and screens himself with the protective screen of Allāh?' They all cried: 'Yes!'

"'And then,' he continued, 'does that same man sit [with his male companions] later on, telling them: "I did such and such, and I did such and such..."?' Not one of them said a word, so he turned to address the women: 'Is there any woman among you,' he asked, 'who would talk [to others about it afterwards]?' Not one of them said a word.

"A certain young woman then knelt on one knee [to raise herself slightly above the other women sitting all around her] and craned her neck toward Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so that he would notice her and hear what she had to say. Then she spoke up: 'O Messenger of Allāh, the men do gossip, that's for sure, and the women certainly gossip too!' So he said:

> Can you think of a situation that bears an exact resemblance to this? It is just like the situation where a she-devil *[shaiṭāna]* meets a he-devil *[shaiṭān]* in the street, and he uses her to satisfy his sexual need, with all the people watching him do it.

Surely it is a matter of fact, that what is most pleasing to men is something that can be detected by its aroma, while its color remains invisible! Surely it is a matter of fact, that what is most pleasing to women is something that can be recognized by its color, while its odor cannot be detected!'"

On the spiritual penalties incurred by a spouse who refuses to have sexual intercourse with his or her marriage partner.

If the husband invites his wife to have sexual intercourse with him, and she rejects his invitation, she is being disobedient to Allāh (Exalted is He) and incurring a burden of sin *[wizr]*.

As the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said, in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* reported by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> Whenever a wife refuses to make herself available to her husband for the satisfaction of his sexual need, she incurs two measures of the weight of sin *[qīrāṭān mina'l-iṣr]*. And whenever a husband refuses to make himself available to his wife for the satisfaction of her sexual need, he incurs one measure of the weight of sin *[mina'l-iṣr qīrāṭ]*.[130]

According to certain traditions *[aḥādīth]*, he also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If one of you calls his wife to join him in his bed, she must go to him [at once], even if she happens to be busy at the kitchen stove.

From yet another report by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If one of you calls his wife to join him in his bed, but she does not go to him, and he then spends the whole night feeling angry with her, the angels will curse her until she sees the break of day.

Qais ibn Sa'd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "I had gone to al-Ḥīra, where I saw the local inhabitants bowing down in prostration before a governor *[marzubān]* of theirs, so

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[130] To explain the uncommon word *iṣr*, the author notes that it has the same meaning as *ithm*, a more familiar term for 'sin, sinful offense.' As for the word *qīrāṭ*, it is interesting to note that the English *carat*, a measure of weight for precious stones, is derived from this Arabic term, by way of the Italian form *carato*.

I went to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, you are more entitled to have people bowing down in prostration before you!'

"To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'Are you suggesting that, if you passed by my tomb, you would prostrate yourself before it?' I said: 'No!' and he went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'Well then, none of you must ever do that!'"

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If I were to command anyone at all to bow down in prostration before any other person, I would command the wives to prostrate themselves [*an yasjudna*] before their husbands.[131]

It is reported on the authority of Ḥakīm ibn Muʿāwiya al-Qushairī that his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him) told him:

"I once said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, what right does the wife of one of us have over her husband?' and he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> That you should feed her when you feed yourself, that you should clothe her when you clothe yourself, that you should not strike her in the face, that you should not disfigure her, and that you should never give her the cold-shoulder treatment except in a domestic situation."

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[131] The author adds the explanation: "Because of the rights [*huqūq*] which Allāh (Exalted is He) has conferred on them [the husbands] over them [the wives]." He also notes, to account for the behavior of the people of al-Ḥīra: "The *marzubān* was a king [*malik*] of theirs." (The Persian term *marzbān* or *marzabān*, which assumed the form *marzubān* in Arabic, was actually applied to the governor of a border province.)

On the steps to be taken by the husband in dealing with a rebellious wife, and on the appointment of arbitrators to attempt a reconciliation between the estranged spouses.

If the wife persists in [the overbearing and rebellious attitude called] *nushūz*, which means either a total refusal on her part to respond to his needs in this matter [of sexual intercourse], or that she responds very unwillingly and reluctantly, the husband should start by appealing to her conscience and putting her in fear of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

If she still persists in her rebellious attitude, he should give her the cold-shoulder treatment [*hajarahā*] in bed and in conversation, for three days at the most. If she then mends her ways, [well and good], but if not, he has the authority to beat her with something that will not cause serious injury, such as a *dirra* or a *mikhrāq*,[132] because the object of the exercise is to get her to correct her behavior and become obedient to him, not to ruin her.

If there is still no improvement in the state of affairs between the couple, the judge [*ḥākim*] should send in two arbitrators [*ḥakamain*]. These must be free men [*ḥurrain*], Muslims of impeccable reputation [*'adlain*], one of them from the husband's family and the other from that of the wife. The two spouses must entrust them with the task of making an investigation to determine what is in their best interest, whether it be a reconciliation [*iṣlāḥ*], a legal separation [*firāq*], or something else again. Then, whatever action may be taken by the two arbitrators, the couple will be strictly obliged to accept their ruling [*ḥukm*].

[132] The *dirra* is vaguely defined by the Arabic lexicographers as 'a certain thing with which one beats or flogs.' According to E.W. Lane, who could not find any Arab who could describe it in his day (first half of the 19th century), "it seems to have been a kind of whip, or scourge, of twisted cords or thongs, used for punishment and in sport."

As for the *mikhrāq*, it is said to be 'a twisted kerchief, or inflated skin, or the like, with which boys play, beating one another therewith; so called because it rends [*yakhriqu*] the air when they make use of it.' (See: E.W.Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *D–R–R* and art. *KH–R–Q*.)

CHAPTER THREE

On the duty to enjoin what is right and fair and to forbid what is wrong and unfair *[al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf wa'n-nahy 'ani'l-munkar].*

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has mentioned those who enjoin what is right and fair *[ma'rūf]* and who forbid what is wrong and unfair *[munkar]*, and He has praised them in His Book [the Qur'ān]. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> Those who enjoin what is right and fair and who forbid what is wrong and unfair, and those who keep the limits of Allāh. (9:112)[133]
>
> You are the best community *[umma]* that has ever been brought into being for the sake of mankind. You enjoin what is right and fair and you forbid what is wrong and unfair; and you believe in Allāh. (3:110)
>
> And the believers, men and women, are protecting friends *[awliyā']* one of another; they enjoin what is right and fair and they forbid what is wrong and unfair. (9:71)

Furthermore, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> You must enjoin what is right and fair, and you must forbid what is wrong and unfair, or else Allāh (Exalted is He) will let the worst among you get the upper hand over the best among you; then the best among you may call out in supplication, but they will receive no answer to their prayers.

According to a report from Sālim ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn 'Umar, on the authority of his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Enjoin what is right and fair, and forbid what is wrong and unfair, before you call out in supplication but receive no answer to your prayers, and before you beg for

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[133] In full, this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* reads:

> [Triumphant] are those who turn in repentance [to Allāh], those who serve [Him], those who praise [Him], those who fast, those who bow down, those who fall prostrate [in worship], those who enjoin what is right and fair and who forbid what is wrong and unfair, and those who keep the limits of Allāh. And give good tidings to the believers!

> forgiveness but are not forgiven. It is certainly a fact that enjoining what is right and fair, and forbidding what is wrong and unfair, will neither drive away a blessing nor bring a time appointed [for death] any closer.
>
> It is certainly a fact that, when the priests *[aḥbār]* among the Jews and the monks *[ruhbān]* among the Christians ceased to enjoin what is right and fair and to forbid what is wrong and unfair, Allāh cursed them on the tongues of their Prophets *[anbiyā']*, and then they were overwhelmed by misfortune.

The enjoining of what is right and fair, and the forbidding of what is wrong and unfair, these are duties incumbent on every Muslim who is a free man *[ḥurr]*, legally responsible for his actions *[mukallaf]*, and sufficiently well informed about the issues, provided he has the capacity to perform these duties in a manner that will not actually result in a grave disturbance *[fasād 'aẓīm]* and in serious damage to himself, his property and his family. It makes no difference whether he happens to be a leader of the community *[imām]*, a scholar *['ālim]*, a judge *[qāḍī]*, or an ordinary citizen *[wāḥid mina'r-ra'iyya]*.

When we stipulate that he must have clear and certain knowledge that something is indeed wrong and unfair, we do so for the simple reason that there is a danger here of falling into sin, because it is hard for the critic to be absolutely sure that the facts of the case are not contrary to what he suspects them to be. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> O you who believe! Avoid a great deal of suspicion. Some suspicion is a sin. (49:12)

A person is under no obligation to uncover that which has been concealed from him, because the effort to do so has been forbidden by Allāh (Exalted is He) in His words:

> Do not spy *[lā tajassasū]*! (49:12)

A person has a duty to condemn only that which is manifestly wrong. To pry into that which is concealed involves the disclosure of what has been kept hidden, and this is not allowed according to the sacred law *[shar']*.

On the importance of having the necessary capacity and ability before attempting to perform these duties.

When we state that possession of the appropriate capacity and ability is a necessary precondition for the discharging of these duties, our assertion is based on a traditional report, according to which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If it ever happens that a group of people have in their midst a man who commits sinful offenses, and they are capable of correcting his behavior, yet they do not act accordingly, Allāh will surely overwhelm them with chastisement before they repent.

Thus we see that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) made this a precondition. What it amounts to is that the people of righteousness *[ahl aṣ-ṣalāḥ]* must have the upper hand, that the ruler *[sulṭān]* must be devoted to justice and that the good folk must support him.

If a person finds himself in a situation where to criticize a wrong would mean putting his life at risk, as well as attracting injury to his person and his property, he is under no obligation to do so, in view of the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> And cast not yourselves by your own hands into destruction. (2:195)

And because of His words (Exalted is He):

> And do not kill yourselves. (4:29)

There is also the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> It is not appropriate for the believer *[mu'min]* to degrade himself.

Someone asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, how could he degrade himself?" and he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> He should not embark on something he cannot accomplish.

To cite another saying of Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If you see a problem that none of you can change, you must be patient, so that Allāh (Exalted is He) may be the One who will change it.

Assuming it has now been established that a person is under no obligation to criticize a wrong [in the circumstances described above], is it at least permissible for him to make such criticism, even when he has good reason to believe that his life could be in danger?

In our opinion, this is indeed permissible. It is in fact the most meritorious course for him to take, if he is numbered among the people of firm resolve *['azīma]* and patience *[ṣabr]*, since it is like waging war *[jihād]* with the unbelievers *[kuffār]*, in the cause of Allāh. Indeed, Allāh (Exalted is He) has said, in the story of Luqmān:

> [And Luqmān said to his son:] "Enjoin what is right and fair, forbid what is wrong and unfair, and endure with patience whatever may befall you." (31:17)

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> O Abū Huraira, enjoin what is right and fair, and forbid what is wrong and unfair, and endure with patience whatever may befall you.

This advice is particularly appropriate to the conditions that prevail under the rule of a tyrant *[sulṭān jā'ir]*, or when the doctrine of faith *[īmān]* must be openly expressed in an environment where the doctrine of unbelief *[kufr]* is in the ascendant. On this the Islamic jurists *[fuqahā']* are in unanimous agreement, and any difference of opinion that may exist between us and them is not relevant to either of these two subjects.

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On the three approaches to the condemnation of wrongs: with the hand, with the tongue and with the heart.

Once it has been established that the condemnation of wrongs *[al-inkār]* is a necessary duty, it should be noted that those who discharge this duty *[al-munkirūn]* are grouped in three distinct categories:

1. The first group is made up of those who are in a position to give effect to their condemnation through the use of physical force;[134] that is to say, it consists of the leaders of the community *[aʾimma]* and the rulers in power *[salāṭīn]*.[135]
2. The second group is made up of those who express their condemnation verbally rather than by physical means;[136] in other words, it consists of the learned scholars *[ʿulamāʾ]*.
3. The third group is made up of those who can express their condemnation only through their feelings;[137] in other words, it consists of the mass of ordinary people *[ʿāmma]*.

This is borne out by a tradition *[ḥadīth]* that has been handed down to us, namely the report transmitted by Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), according to whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If one of you happens to see something wrong *[munkar]*, let him try to correct it with his hand. If he is unable to do it this way, then with his tongue. If he cannot do it this way either, then with his heart, although that is the weakest of faith *[aḍʿafu'l-īmān]*.[138]

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[134] Literally, 'by means of the hand' *[bi'l-yad]*.

[135] The singular forms corresponding to *aʾimma* and *salāṭīn* are *imām* and *sulṭān*, respectively.

[136] Literally, 'by means of the tongue, not the hand' *[bi'l-lisāni dūna'l-yad]*.

[137] Literally, 'with the heart' *[bi'l-qalb]*.

[138] **Author's note:** Meaning, 'the weakest act of faith' *[aḍʿafu fiʿli'l-īmān]*.

One of the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* (may Allāh be well pleased with them all) is reported as having said: "If one of you happens to see something wrong, but he is incapable of taking action to correct it, let him say three times: 'O Allāh, surely this is wrong!'[139] If he does say this, he will actually be entitled to the spiritual reward *[thawāb]* that is earned by enjoining what is right and fair and forbidding what is wrong and unfair."

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[139] *Allāhumma inna hādha munkar.*

If it seems quite impossible to eliminate a particular wrong, does one still have a duty to express condemnation of it?

Two views attributed to Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal.

If a person has some compelling reason to believe that a particular wrong is impossible to eliminate, and that the guilty party is bound to persist in committing it, is he or is he not obliged to express condemnation of that wrong?

Two conflicting answers to this question have been ascribed to Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), namely:

1. The obligation does exist, because there is always a conceivable possibility that the guilty party may indeed respond to being censured and rebuked. Through the blessing of his critic's honest candor *[ṣidq]*, his heart may be softened and he may be rendered amenable to [Allāh's] improving influence *[tawfīq]* and guidance *[hidāya]*, with the result that he will in fact mend his ways.

2. The person concerned is not obliged to express condemnation of what is wrong, at least not until he has some compelling reason to believe that it can in fact be eliminated. Since the aim and object of expressing condemnation is the elimination of what is wrong, it follows that to refrain from such condemnation must be the better course for him to adopt, as long as he is strongly committed to the view that no positive change can be effected.

* * *

A more lenient view attributed to Imām Aḥmad.

Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) may have taken a more lenient view of the matter [discussed in the preceding subsection].

According to another account of his doctrine, it would seem that he did not altogether disapprove [of solitary bathing in the nude], since on one occasion, when he was asked about the case of a man at the edge of a river with no one to observe him, he said: "I would hope *[arjū]*...," with the implication that there was nothing wrong in it.

Stronger and more correct, however, is the above-mentioned argument in favor of prohibition.

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but his own hypocrisy *[nifāq]*, the enthusiastic support of people addicted to sinful disobedience, the willing cooperation of the devils among men and jinn in defiance of Allāh (Exalted is He), the abandonment of obedient service to Him, and the commission of unlawful deeds.

3. His manner of commanding and forbidding must be one that is characterized by lenient flexibility and sympathetic understanding, not by boorish impoliteness and harsh insensitivity. To put it even more emphatically, he should approach the task with an attitude of friendliness and good will. He should have a feeling of genuine concern for his brother, considering the fact that he has cooperated with his own enemy, the accursed Satan, who has seized control of his mind, and who has made it seem attractive to him to disobey his Lord and reject His commandment, with the intention of causing him to perish and be consigned to the Fire [of Hell]. As Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> [The devil] summons his party only that they may be among the inhabitants of the blazing inferno.[140] (35:6)

Allāh (Exalted is He) also said to His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> It was by the mercy of Allāh that you were lenient with them, for if you had been harsh and hard of heart, they would have scattered from all around you. (3:159)

Moreover, Allāh (Exalted is He) said to Moses and Aaron *[Hārūn]* (peace be upon them both), when He sent them to Pharaoh:

> And speak to him gently, for then he may be mindful, or perhaps feel afraid. (20:44)

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said, according to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Usāma:

> It is not appropriate for anyone to enjoin what is right and fair and to forbid what is wrong and unfair, until he possesses three good qualities: [He must be] well versed *[ʿālim]* in what he is enjoining, well versed in what he is forbidding; gentle *[rafīq]* in the process of enjoining, gentle in the process of forbidding; tolerant *[ḥalīm]* in his approach to enjoining, tolerant in his approach to forbidding.[141]

4. He must be patient *[ṣabūr]*, tolerant *[ḥalīm]*, long-suffering *[ḥamūl]*, humble *[mutawāḍiʿ]*, dispassionate *[zāʾil al-hawā]*, stout-hearted *[qawī al-qalb]*, and disposed to be lenient *[layyin al-jānib]*. He must be a physician *[ṭabīb]* capable of healing the sick, a doctor *[ḥakīm]* with the skill to treat

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[140] *innamā yadʿū ḥizbahu li-yakūnū min aṣḥābi's-saʿīr.*

[141] In the printed text of the Damascus edition of *al-Ghunya*, the third of the three good qualities mentioned in this frequently quoted tradition has somehow been omitted from the list.

a lunatic *[majnūn]*, and a leader *[imām]* who can act as a guide. In the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> And We appointed from among them leaders guiding by Our command, when they endured with patience. (32:24)

[They endured with patience] the insults and injuries they had to suffer at the hands of their own people, in order to sustain, strengthen and support the religion *[dīn]* of Allāh, so He apponted them to be the leaders, the guides and the physicians of His religion, the commanding officers of the believers *[qādat al-mu'minīn]*.

In the story of Luqmān, Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> [And Luqmān said to his son:] "Enjoin what is right and fair, forbid what is wrong and unfair, and endure with patience whatever may befall you; surely that is true constancy *[min 'azmi'l-umūr]*." (31:17)

5. He must be someone who puts into practice what he commands other people to do. He must also be personally free of any guilt, untainted by what he forbids other people to do, so that they have nothing to let them gain the upper hand over him, thereby exposing him to blame and censure in the sight of Allāh. Consider the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> Will you bid other people to righteousness, while you forget [to practice it] yourselves? And you are readers of the Book! Have you no sense at all? (2:44)

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On the night when I was taken on my heavenly journey, I saw some men whose lips were being clipped with scissors, so I said: "Who are these people, O Gabriel?" and he told me: "These are the preachers *[khuṭabā']* of your Community *[Umma]*, the ones who gave instructions to other people but forgot [to practice those instructions] themselves, even though they were readers of the Book."

In the words of the poet:

Do not tell others not to do
the very thing you do yourself.
The shame on you, if you act thus,
is very great indeed.[142]

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[142] *lā tanha 'an khalqin wa ta'ti mithlahu—'ārun 'alaika idhā fa'alta 'aẓīmun.*

Qatāda (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "We have been told that this is written in the Torah: 'The human being *[ibn Ādam]* remembers Me and he forgets Me, he calls upon Me and he runs away from Me. In vain is what you are trying to do.'"

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) may have been referring here to someone who enjoins what is right and forbids what is wrong, yet leaves himself out of it; but He (Exalted is He) is More Aware *[A'lam]* of the truth of the matter.

On the desirability of giving commands and prohibitions in a private context whenever possible.

The most appropriate course for a person to take, when he proposes to tell someone else what is right and what is wrong, is that he should find an opportunity to convey these instructions in a private context *[khalwa]*, if it is at all possible for him to do so. The advantages of this approach are that it is more immediate, that it is more effective in communicating spiritual counsel *[mawʿiẓa]*, stern admonition *[zajr]* and sincere advice *[naṣīḥa]*, and that it is more likely to result in the acceptance of what is right and the renunciation of what is wrong.

As Abu'd-Dardāʾ (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once put it: "When someone preaches to his brother in public, he is exposing him to disgrace *[shānahu]*, but when someone offers him spiritual counsel in private, he is blessing him with grace *[zānahu]*."

If the person concerned has attempted this [private approach], but it has not yielded any positive results, he must then proceed to do his duty in the public forum. In order to accomplish his task, he should try to enlist the support of ordinary good folk *[ahl al-khair]*, and then, if this does not work, he may apply to the people in power *[aṣḥāb as-sulṭān]* for assistance. The active condemnation of what is wrong and unfair *[inkār al-munkar]* must never be totally abandoned, because Allāh (Exalted is He) sternly rebuked a society of people who had in fact abandoned it, and who had come to regard it as unimportant. He said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> They would not try to prevent one another from doing anything wrong that they did; evil indeed were the things they used to do! (5:79)[143]

He has also said (Exalted is He):

> Why is it that the rabbis and the priests do not forbid their utterance of sin and their consumption of illicit gain? Evil indeed is their handiwork. (5:63)[144]

[143] *kānū lā yatanāhauna ʿan munkarin faʿalūh—la-biʾsa mā kānū yafʿalūn.*

[144] *lau lā yanhāhumu'r-rabbāniyyūna wa'l-aḥbāru ʿan qaulihimu'l-ithma wa aklihimu's-suḥt—la-biʾsa mā kānū yaṣnaʿūn.*

In other words, how can it be that their learned scholars [*ʻulamāʼ*], their experts in religious law [*fuqahāʼ*] and their teachers of scripture [*qurrāʼ*] do not forbid them to use obscene language, to consume unlawful gain, and to commit sins of disobedience?

It has been said that Allāh (Exalted is He) told Joshua [*Yūshaʻ*] the son of Nūn (peace be upon him),[145] by way of inspiration: "I am going to destroy, from among your people, forty thousand of your good folk and sixty thousand of your wicked folk."

Joshua said: "O my Lord, [that may be easy to understand in the case of] these wicked ones, but why should the good ones suffer?" and he replied (Exalted is He): "Because they did not share My wrath [against the wicked folk], although they did share their food and their drink with them."

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[145] Although not mentioned by name in the Qurʼān, Yūshaʻ ibn Nūn (peace be upon him) is identified by some Islamic authorities as the servant referred to in Sūra 18:60: "And when Moses said to his servant: 'I will not give up until I reach the point where the two oceans meet, though I march on for ages.'"

A different opinion concerning the fifth of the five preconditions which must be met before a person can be regarded as qualified to enjoin what is right and fair and to forbid what is wrong and unfair.

According to the list we have furnished above,[146] the fifth precondition is that the person concerned must be someone who puts into practice[147] what he commands other people to do, and who is guiltless of what he forbids other people to do.

In presenting this view of the matter, we were overlooking the fact that certain Shaikhs have maintained that the duty to enjoin what is right and fair, and to forbid what is wrong and unfair, is incumbent on the *fāsiq* [someone who falls short of the standards of rectitude set by Islamic law] in just the same way as it is incumbent on the *ʿadl* [someone who does conform to the highest standards of rectitude]. This is why we stated the case by citing the general import of the relevant Qurʾānic verses *[āyāt]* and traditional reports *[akhbār]*, without entering into the discussion of different points of view.

Some of our venerable predecessors *[salaf]* have seen a reference to the enjoining of what is right and fair and the forbidding of what is wrong and unfair *[al-amr bi'l-maʿrūf wa'n-nahy ʿani'l-munkar]* in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> But there is also the kind of man who would sell himself, desiring Allāh's good pleasure. (2:207)[148]

It has also been related that ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once heard someone reciting this particular verse, whereupon he exclaimed: "'Surely we belong to Allāh, and unto Him we are returning!'[149] There was a man who set out to enjoin what is right and fair and to forbid what is wrong and unfair, and he got himself killed for his pains."

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[146] See pp. 150–52 above.

[147] Reading *ʿāmilan*. The Damascus text has *ʿāliman*, which would apply to the first of the five preconditions (that the person concerned must have expert knowledge of what he intends to enjoin and forbid), not to the fifth.

[148] *wa mina'n-nāsi man yashrī nafsahu'btighāʾa marḍāti'llāh.*

[149] ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was also quoting from the Qurʾān (2:156): *innā li'llāhi wa innā ilaihi rājiʿūn.*

Abū Umāma (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The most excellent of the martyrs *[shuhadā']* on the Day of Resurrection will be Ḥamza ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib,[150] and any man who offered resistance to a tyrannical leader *[imām jā'ir]* by commanding him to act rightly and forbidding him to act wrongly, with the result that the tyrant killed him.

Allāh (Exalted is He) has spoken of a person who is forbidden to do what is wrong, but arrogant pride holds him tight in its grip, so that he does not restrain himself. In His own words (Exalted is He):

> And when it is said to him: "Be careful of your duty to Allāh," arrogant pride holds him tight in the grip of sin. Hell will settle his account *[fa-ḥasbuhu Jahannam]*. Oh, what an evil resting place! (2:206)

Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "One of the greatest of all sins in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He) is committed when the servant [of the Lord] is told: 'Be careful of your duty to Allāh,' and he responds by saying: 'Mind your own business! *['alaika bi-nafsik]*.'"

All of this can be applied to every type of person, not only to the righteous *[ṣāliḥ]* but also to the unrighteous *[ṭāliḥ]*.

According to the report of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Enjoin what is right and fair, even if you do not practice it yourselves, and forbid what is wrong and unfair, even if you do not refrain from committing it yourselves.

It is a matter of fact that no one is entirely innocent of sinful disobedience, whether outwardly *[ẓāhiran]* or inwardly *[bāṭinan]*, so if we insist that wrong can never be condemned except by someone who is guiltless of it, the enjoining of what is right and fair and the forbidding of what is wrong and unfair will become quite impossible. The enjoining of what is right and fair and the forbidding of what is wrong and unfair will then be obliterated and must vanish without trace.

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[150] Ḥamza ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was the uncle of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who acknowledged his exceptionally valiant exploits in the cause of Islām by calling him "the Lion of Allāh and His Messenger." He met his death at the battle of Uhud, where his dead body was shamefully mutilated by the unbelievers.

On the various categories to be distinguished in order to determine what ought to be enjoined, what ought to be forbidden, and who bears the responsibility.

Of the two categories to be distinguished at the outset, one contains those things that ought to be enjoined, while the other consists of those that ought to be condemned. This distinction takes account of the fact that everything that is in conformity with the Book [of Allāh], with the Sunna [of His Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)], and with sound reason *['aql]*, must be right and fair *[ma'rūf]*, while everything that is at variance with them must be wrong and unfair *[munkar]*.

It then becomes necessary to make a twofold subdivision of these categories, in order to distinguish the following:

1. Subjects that are matters of common knowledge, because they are as familiar to the ordinary people *['awāmm]* as they are to the specialists *[khawāṣṣ]*. Everyone knows, for instance, about the obligatory nature of the five daily prayers *[ṣalāwāt]*, the fast *[ṣaum]* during the month of Ramaḍān, the alms-due *[zakāt]* and the pilgrimage *[ḥajj]*, as well as other such matters.

As for matters of common knowledge within the category of things that are wrong and unfair, these include the unlawful nature of adultery and fornication *[zinā]*, the drinking of wine *[khamr]*, theft *[sariqa]*, highway robbery *[qaṭ' aṭ-ṭarīq]*, usurious transactions *[ribā]*, the usurpation of property *[ghaṣb]*, and so on. Within the scope of this subdivision, the obligation to condemn what is wrong is incumbent upon the ordinary people, just as it is incumbent upon the experts in the ranks of the learned scholars *['ulamā']*.

2. Subjects in which only the specialists are sufficiently well versed. Suppose, for example, that someone is subscribing to an erroneous

doctrine concerning what beliefs may validly be held about the Maker *[al-Bāriʾ]* and what beliefs may not be validly held about Him. This is a case where only the learned scholars are qualified to express criticism *[inkār]* of the person concerned. Nevertheless, if one of the scholars provides an individual among the ordinary people with enough information on the subject, it becomes permissible for the latter to criticize the error. The layman *[ʿāmmī]* does have an obligation to condemn what is wrong, but only when he is in a position to do so effectively, as we have just explained, and it is not permissible for him to act before achieving this state of readiness.

Let us now consider the situation that arises when there is a lack of unanimity among the Islamic jurists *[fuqahāʾ]* on the point in question, and when it is legitimate to exercise independent judgment *[ijtihād]* on the matter. Take, for example, the case of an ordinary person who drinks the beverage called *nabīdh*,[151] simply following without question *[muqallidan]* the legal doctrine of Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him); or that of a woman who gets married without the offices of a marriage guardian *[walī]*, following the normal practice according to that same school of law.

In cases like these, a person whose own loyalty is to the school *[madhhab]* of Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal], or to that of ash-Shāfiʿī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them both), has no right to condemn the behavior of those [who have chosen to follow the Ḥanafī school]. As Imām Aḥmad himself said, according to the account of his doctrine reported by al-Marwazī: "It is not appropriate for the jurist *[faqīh]* to try to convert other people to his own school of legal thought, nor should he treat them harshly."

[151] The beverage called *nabīdh* is a kind of wine made from dates or raisins. Since it ferments and becomes intoxicating at a certain stage, most of the Islamic jurists came to the conclusion that it should be outlawed altogether, to be on the safe side. Only the Ḥanafī school continued to allow the moderate consumption of *nabīdh*, citing numerous traditions *[aḥādīth]* in support of their doctrine.

According to the most notable of these traditions, as recorded by Ibn Māja, ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: "We used to prepare *nabīdh* for Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), using a skin for the purpose. We would take a handful of dates or a handful of raisins, cast them into the skin and pour water over them. The *nabīdh* we prepared in this way in the morning, would be drunk by him in the evening; and when we prepared it in the evening, he would drink it the following morning."

According to another tradition on the subject, Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) said that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to drink *nabīdh* as late as the third day after its preparation, but what was left after that would be poured away.

Provided this point has been established, it can be stated that the duty to express condemnation arises only in cases involving the infraction of a rule on which the jurists have reached a consensus *[ijmāʿ]*, and not in cases where legal opinions differ.

It should be noted, however, that some accounts of the doctrine of Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) would seem to indicate the permissibility of expressing condemnation even of a practice about which there is disagreement. This is confirmed by something he once said, according to the version reported by al-Maimūnī, to the effect that a man who comes across a group of people, and sees that they are playing chess *[shaṭranj]*, should tell them that what they are doing is forbidden, and should rebuke them sternly. It is well known, of course, that this [game of chess] is permissible according to legal doctrine of the colleagues of ash-Shāfiʿī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them).

A more lenient view attributed to Imām Aḥmad.

Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) may have taken a more lenient view of the matter [discussed in the preceding subsection].

According to another account of his doctrine, it would seem that he did not altogether disapprove [of solitary bathing in the nude], since on one occasion, when he was asked about the case of a man at the edge of a river with no one to observe him, he said: "I would hope *[arjū]*...," with the implication that there was nothing wrong in it.

Stronger and more correct, however, is the above-mentioned argument in favor of prohibition.

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Faith is defended in like manner by five citadels, the first of which is certitude *[yaqīn]*, then sincerity *[ikhlāṣ]*, then the correct performance of compulsory religious duties *[adā' al-farā'iḍ]*, then the fulfillment of all customary obligations *[itmām as-sunan]*, and then the careful observance of good practices *[ḥifẓ al-ādāb]*. As long as the servant [of Allāh] continues to observe the practices that constitute refined behavior, and to cultivate them with meticulous care and attention, the devil *[shaiṭān]* cannot hope to find a weak spot in him. But if he neglects the refinement of behavior, the devil will soon make inroads into his other defences, undermining his fulfillment of customary obligations, then his performance of compulsory religious duties, then his sincerity, and then his certitude.

It is therefore most important for a person to observe the practices that constitute refinement in every aspect of his behavior, from the way he performs his ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* and his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, to the way he conducts the business of buying and selling, and in other matters besides these.

This brings us to the end of the concise treatment we chose to adopt and proposed to devote to the good practices recommended by the sacred law *[ādāb ash-sharī'a]*.

By carrying out the commandment [of Allāh] in the five basic acts of worship *['ibādāt]*,[153] as described in the earlier chapters of this work, a person will come to be a Muslim. Then, by diligently cultivating these good practices, he will come to be a follower of the Sunna [of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)] and one who treads in the footsteps of the Islamic tradition *[athar]*. He will thereby obtain a certain amount of direct knowledge *[ma'rifa]*, although it still remains for him to discover the real experience *[ḥaqīqa]* of direct knowledge of the Creator *[Ṣāni']*.

Since this involves the workings of the spiritual core *[a'māl al-qalb]*, we postponed discussion of the subject, in order to make it easy for him to take the initial step of entering our religion *[dīn]*. But once he has clothed himself outwardly with the light of Islām *[taqammaṣa bi-nūri'l-islāmi ẓāhiran]*, we shall say to him: "Now clothe yourself inwardly with the light of faith! *[taqammaṣ bi-nūri'l-īmāni bāṭinan]*."

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[153] These fundamentals of Islām, often called the 'Five Pillars,' are (1) the twofold declaration of faith *[shahādatān]*, (2) the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, (3) the alms-due *[zakāt]*, (4) the fast *[ṣaum]* during the month of Ramaḍān, and (5) the pilgrimage *[hajj]*. For the author's discussion of these basic duties, see Chapter One, pp. 7–52 above.

CHAPTER FOUR

Concerning knowledge of the Creator *[Ṣāni']* (Almighty and Glorious is He).

We shall now give a concise account of our knowledge *[ma'rifa]* of the Creator *[Ṣāni']* (Almighty and Glorious is He), citing the relevant Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]* and evidence from other sources.

The believer must acknowledge and be thoroughly convinced that He is Single *[Wāḥid]*, Unique *[Fard]*, Eternal *[Ṣamad]*.

> Say: "He is Allāh, the One! Allāh, the Everlasting! He does not beget, nor was He begotten; and there is none comparable unto Him." (112:1–4)[154]
>
> There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. (42:11)[155]

He has no match *[shabīh]* and no counterpart *[naẓīr]*, no assistant *['awn]* and no partner *[sharīk]*, no aide *[ẓahīr]* and no minister *[wazīr]*, no peer *[nidd]* and no adviser *[mushīr]*. He is not a physical body *[jism]*, for if He were, He could be touched. He is not a material substance *[jawhar]*, for if He were, He would be accessible to sensory perception. He is not an accidental property *['araḍ]*, for if He were, His existence would be impermanent. He is not an entity with a composite structure *[tarkīb]*, nor is He an apparatus *[āla]* and a combination of elements *[ta'līf]*, a constitution *[māhiyya]* and a formal definition *[taḥdīd]*.

It is He, Allāh, who is holding the sky aloft and keeping the earth in place, not some property of nature *[ṭabī'a mina'ṭ-ṭabā'i']*, not some astronomical configuration *[ṭāli' mina'ṭ-ṭawāli']*, not a darkness that looms, and not a light that gleams. He is:

• *Ḥāḍir*	Present to all things through cognition *['ilm]*
• *Shāhid*	Witness to all things without physical contact
• *'Azīz*	Almighty
• *Qāhir*	Irresistible

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[154] *qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad—Allāhu's-Ṣamad—lam yalid wa lam yūlad—wa lam yakun lahu kufuwan aḥad.*

[155] *laisa ka-mithlihi shai': wa Huwa's-Samī'u'l-Baṣīr.*

Ḥākim	Governing
Qādir	Omnipotent
Rāḥim	Merciful
Ghāfir	Forgiver of sins
Sātir	Veiler of faults
Mu'izz	Ennobling
Nāṣir	Supportive
Ra'ūf	Kind
Khāliq	Creator
Fāṭir	Maker
Awwal	First
Ākhir	Last
Ẓāhir	Outwardly Manifest
Bāṭin	Inwardly Concealed
Fard Ma'būd	Uniquely Worthy of Worship
Ḥayyun lā yamūt	Living, never to die
Azaliyyun lā yafūt	Existing from All Eternity, never to pass away
Abadiyyu'l-Malakūt	Eternal Ruler of the Kingdom
Sarmadiyyu'l-Jabarūt	Everlasting Lord of the Dominion
Qayyūmun lā yanām	Self-Sustaining, without ever taking rest
'Azīzun lā yuḍām	Almighty, never to suffer any harm
Manī'un lā yurām	Impregnable, never to be overcome.

Thus to Him belong the Splendid Names *[al-Asmā' al-'Iẓām]* and all the Noble Talents *[al-Mawāhib al-Kirām]*.

He has decreed that all human beings *[anām]* shall enjoy but a fleeting existence, for He has said:

> Everyone who dwells upon the earth must pass away, yet the Face of your Lord still abides, in Majesty and Glory. (55:26,27)[156]

On high is He established, upon the heavenly Throne *['Arsh]*,[157] encompassing the kingdom [of heaven and earth], while His cognitive awareness *['ilm]* embraces all things.

> Unto Him good words ascend, and the righteous deed He does exalt. (35:10)
> He directs the business [of His entire creation] from the heaven to the earth, then it goes up to Him in one day, the measure of which is a thousand years by your reckoning. (32:5)

He has created all creatures *[khalā'iq]* and their doings *[af'āl]*, and He has predetermined their means of sustenance *[arzāq]* and their spans of life *[ājāl]*. No one can bring forward what He has postponed, and no one can postpone what He has brought forward.

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[156] *kullu man 'alaihā fān—wa yabqā wajhu Rabbika dhu'l-jalāli wa'l-ikrām.*

[157] An allusion to several verses of the Qur'ān, including 32:4, which reads: "Allāh it is Who created the heavens and the earth, and that which is between them, in six days. Then He established Himself upon the Throne *[thumma 'stawā 'ala'l-'arsh]*."

[158] *ya'lamu's-sirra wa akhfā.*

He willed the whole universe *[ʿālam]* and what His creatures would be doing. If He had chosen to prevent them from sinning, they would never have offended against Him. If He had wished them to obey Him entirely, they would certainly have obeyed Him.

> He knows the secret and [what is yet] more deeply hidden. (20:7)[158]

He is Cognizant *[ʿAlīm]* of what is in the breasts [of men]. How should He not know, He who created? And He is the Subtle One *[Laṭīf]*, the All-Aware *[Khabīr]*. (67:14)

He is the One who sets things in motion *[Muḥarrik]* and the One who brings things to rest *[Musakkin]*.

No concept of Him can be formed by any stretch of the imagination, nor can He be assessed by any effort of the mind.[159] He cannot be judged by comparison with human beings. He is far above being likened to that which He has wrought, or being correlated with what He has invented and devised.

He is the Enumerator of breaths *[Muḥṣi'l-anfās]*, the One 'who reckons with every soul *[nafs]* according to what it has earned.'[160]

> He has indeed counted them, and He has numbered them exactly. And every one of them shall come to Him on the Day of Resurrection, all alone. (19:94,95)

> The Hour is surely coming, but I would rather keep it hidden, so that every soul may be recompensed for what it is striving to achieve. (20:15)[161]

> So He may reward those who do evil with what they have done, and so He may reward those who do good with goodness. (53:31)

He is Independent of His creation *[Ghaniyyun ʿan khalqihi]*, Provident to His creatures *[Rāziqun li-bariyyatihi]*. He supplies food, but He does not need to be fed. He provides sustenance, but He does not need to be sustained. He offers protection, but He does not need to be protected. Every created being *[khalīqa]* is dependent on Him for all its needs. He created them not for the sake of obtaining some benefit, not to ward off some injury, not because of some motive that prompted Him to do it, and not because of some notion *[khāṭir]* that occurred to Him or some idea *[fikr]* that suggested itself, but by sheer Will *[irāda mujarrada]*. As He Himself has said—and He is the Most Truthful of speakers *[Aṣdaqu'l-qā'ilīn]*—He is:

> Lord of the Throne, the All-Glorious, Doer of what He will. (85:15,16)[162]

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[159] *lā tataṣawwaruhu'l-awhām wa lā tuqaddiruhu'l-adhhān.*

[160] An allusion to Qur'ān 13:33.

[161] Only the latter part of this quotation ("so that every soul...") is given in the printed Arabic text.

[162] *Dhu'l-ʿarshi'l-Majīd—Faʿʿālun limā yurīd.*

He is Uniquely Capable of inventing material substances,[163] of doing away with damage and distress, of transforming substances and altering conditions.

> Every day He is about some awesome business *[kulla yaumin Huwa fī sha'n]*. (55:29)

In other words, He is about the business of steering that which He has predestined *[qaddara]* toward that which He has scheduled in time *[waqqata]*.

[The believer must also acknowledge and be thoroughly convinced] that He (Exalted is He) is Living in the sense of having life *[Ḥayyun bi-ḥayāt]*, Knowing in the sense of having knowledge *['Ālimun bi-'ilm]*, Powerful in the sense of having power *[Qādirun bi-qudra]*, Willing in the sense of having will *[Murīdun bi-irāda]*, Hearing in the sense of having a faculty of hearing *[Samī'un bi-sam']*, Seeing in the sense of having a faculty of sight *[Baṣīrun bi-baṣar]*, Consciously Aware in the sense of having conscious awareness *[Mudrikun bi-idrāk]*, Articulate in the sense of having a faculty of speech *[Mutakallimun bi-kalām]*, Commanding in the sense of giving orders *[Āmirun bi-amr]*, Forbidding in the sense of issuing prohibitions *[Nāhiyun bi-nahy]*, and Communicative in the sense of imparting information *[Mukhbirun bi-khabar]*.

[The believer must be convinced] that He (Exalted is He) is Equitable *['Ādil]* in His ruling and His judgment, and Graciously Beneficent *[Muḥsin Mutafaḍḍil]* in His gifts and His favors; that He is an Originator *[Mubdi']* and a Restorer *[Mu'īd]*, a Giver of Life *[Muḥyin]* and a Causer of Death *[Mumīt]*, a Producer *[Muḥdith]* and an Inventor *[Mūjid]*, a Rewarder *[Muthīb]* and a Punisher *[Mu'āqib]*, One who is so Generous *[Jawād]* that He is never stingy, so Long-suffering *[Ḥalīm]* that He is never in a hurry, so Heedful *[Ḥafīẓ]* that He is never forgetful, so Vigilant *[Yaqẓān]* that He is never inattentive, so Wakeful *[Ariq]*[164] that He is never negligent.

He causes feelings of constriction *[yaqbiḍ]* and He causes feelings of expansion *[yabsuṭ]*. He makes us laugh and He makes us happy. He loves and He hates. He disapproves and He approves. He displays anger and He manifests displeasure. He shows compassion and He forgives. He gives and He withholds. He has two hands *[yadān]*, and each of His two hands is a right hand *[yamīn]*.

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[163] *Mutafarridun bi'l-qudrati 'ala'khtirā'i'l-a'yān.*

[164] The editor of the Damascus text has considered it necessary to supply a footnote, explaining that "the author means to say that sleep does not overwhelm Him..."

[165] *wa's-samāwātu maṭwiyyātun bi-yamīnih.*

As He has said (Glorified and Exalted is He):

> And the heavens are rolled up in His right hand. (39:67)[165]

According to a report transmitted on the authority of Nāfi', Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was in the pulpit *[minbar]* when he recited the words of the Qur'ān: 'And the heavens are rolled up in His right hand,' then added: 'There they are in His right hand, so He tosses them about, just as a young boy might toss a ball. Then He says: "I am the Almighty! *[Ana'l-'Azīz]*."'"

Ibn 'Umar went on to say: "I noticed that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was quaking up there in the pulpit; so much so that he was on the verge of falling down."

Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "He clutches all the earths and all the heavens together, yet not even the very edges of them can be seen to protrude from His grasp."

We have it on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik, who heard the report from Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with them), that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Those who act justly and fairly *[muqsitūn]* will be mounted, on the Day of Resurrection, in pulpits of light upon the right hand of the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]*—and each of His two hands is a right hand.

He created Adam (peace be upon him) in the form proper to him *['alā ṣūratih]*.[166] He planted the Garden of Eden *[jannat 'Adn]* with His own hand, and the Tree of Bliss *[shajarat Ṭūbā]*[167] with His own hand. He wrote the Torah with His own hand, and He delivered it to Moses from His hand to his hand. He also spoke to Moses by addressing him directly, with no intermediary channel and without an interpreter.

The hearts *[qulūb]* of His servants are between two fingers of the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]*, so He spins them around *[yuqallibuhā]* as He wills, and He instills in them whatever He wishes.

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[166] This statement is based on the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "*Khalaqa'llāhu Adama 'alā ṣūratih*," which is traditionally interpreted as meaning either: "Allāh created Adam in the *ṣūra* that He originated and ordained," or "Allāh created Adam in the *ṣūra* proper to him."

Definitions of the Arabic word *ṣūra* include: Form, fashion, figure, shape or semblance; that whereby a thing is sensibly distinguished by men in general, and even by many other animate beings, from other things. The essence of a thing, that by being which a thing is what it is, or the property, or quality, or the aggregate of properties or qualities, whereby a thing is what it is. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ṣ–W–R*.)

[167] The *Ṭūbā* tree is traditionally depicted as having its roots in Paradise, while its leaves and branches extend downwards toward the earth. According to some accounts, one of its branches will enter the mansion of each inhabitant of the Garden of Paradise, bearing flowers and ripe fruit of every imaginable kind.

On the Day of Resurrection, the heavens and the earth will be in the palm of His hand, as we know from the tradition *[ḥadīth]*, and He will set His foot in Hell *[Jahannam]*, one part of which will shrink away toward another, while it cries: "Enough! No more!" A group of human beings will issue forth thereafter.

The people of the Garden [of Paradise] will actually see His face, and they will behold it without suffering any injury or harm in the process of beholding it.

As we have learned from the tradition:

> He will reveal Himself *[yatajallā]* to them, and He will give them what they most desire.

He has told us (how Glorious is He as One who tells!):

> To those who do good belongs the finest—and an extra reward! *[li'lladhīna aḥsanu'l-ḥusnā wa ziyāda]*. (10:26)

There are those who maintain that 'the finest' refers to the Garden [of Paradise], and that the 'extra reward' is the contemplation of His noble countenance. He has also said (Exalted is He):

> That day will faces be resplendent, looking toward their Lord. (75:22,23)[168]

His servants will all be paraded before Him on the Day of Judgment and Doom *[yaum al-faṣl wa'd-dīn]*. He will take it upon Himself to settle their accounts, and He will not make anyone other than Himself responsible for carrying out this task.

Allāh (Exalted is He) created seven heavens, one above another, and seven earths, one below another. [The time it takes to travel] from the highest earth to the lowest heaven is five hundred years, and the distance between each heaven and the next is also a journey of five hundred years. There is water above the seventh heaven, and the Throne of the All-Merciful One *['Arsh ar-Raḥmān]* is above the water. Allāh (Exalted is He) is upon the Throne, and beneath Him there are seventy thousand veils of light, of darkness, and of what else He knows best.

The Throne has bearers *[ḥamala]* who carry it. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> Those who bear the Throne, and those who are around it, proclaim the praise of their Lord and believe in Him, and they ask forgiveness for those who believe, [saying]: "Our Lord, You embrace all things in mercy and knowledge; therefore forgive those who repent and follow Your way. Ward off from them the punishment of Hell!" (40:7)

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[168] *wujūhun yauma'idhin nāḍira—ilā Rabbihā nāẓira.*

The Throne has a border [*ḥadd*], which only Allāh knows. [In His own words (Almighty and Glorious is He):]

> And you shall see the angels circling around the Throne. (39:75)[169]

It consists of a single ruby [*yāqūta ḥamrā'*], and its size is equal to that of all the heavens and all the earths combined. Next to the Throne, the Footstool [*kursī*] is like a ring thrown on the ground in a desert tract.

He (Almighty and Glorious is He) knows what is in the seven heavens and what is between them and what is beneath them, and what is in all the earths and what is beneath them and what is between them, and what is beneath the surface of the land, and what is in the depths of the oceans, and the point of growth of every hair and every tree and every seed that grows, and the place where every leaf will fall, and the number of all of these, and the number of all the pebbles and all the grains of sand and all the specks of dust, and the weights of all the mountains, and the measures of all the oceans, and the actions of His servants and their secret thoughts and the breaths they breathe and the words they speak. He knows everything. Nothing of this is hidden from Him.

He is far above any resemblance to His creation. No place is beyond the scope of His cognizance [*'ilm*]. It is not permissible, however, to describe Him as being in every place. The correct statement to make is that He is in Heaven [*fi's-samā'*] upon the Throne [*'ala'l-'arsh*]. As He Himself has said (let us extol Him as befits His Majesty!):

> The All-Merciful has established Himself upon the Throne [*ar-Raḥmānu 'ala'l-'arshi'stawā*]. (20:5)

> ...then established Himself upon the Throne, the All-Merciful.... [*thumma'stawā 'ala'l-'arshi'r-Raḥmānu...*]. (25:59)

He has also said (Exalted is He):

> Unto Him good works ascend, and the righteous deed He does exalt. (35:10)

As for the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), he judged that the Community [*Umma*] had truly accepted Islām when he said to its members: "Where is Allāh?" and they all pointed toward heaven.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said, according to the tradition [*ḥadīth*] of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> When Allāh created the creation, He recorded a writ incumbent upon Himself [*kataba kitāban 'alā Nafsihi*], which is there in His presence above the Throne, [and in it He declared]: "My mercy has overwhelmed My wrath [*inna raḥmatī ghalabat 'alā ghaḍabī*]."

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[169] *wa tara'l-malā'ikata ḥāffīna min ḥauli'l-'arshi.*

It is proper to use the expression 'firmly established Himself'[170] in a quite straightforward, literal sense [*iṭlāq*], without subjecting it to forced interpretation [*ta'wīl*]. It must also be clearly understood to mean the Self-establishment of the Divine Essence [*istiwā' adh-Dhāt*] upon the Throne, not in the sense of bodily sitting down [*qu'ūd*] and making physical contact [*mumāssa*], as maintained by the [heretical sects known as] the Mujassima[171] and the Karrāmiyya,[172] not in the abstract sense of exaltedness [*'uluww*] and elevated dignity [*rif'a*], as maintained by the Ash'ariyya,[173] and not in the sense of control [*istīlā'*] and domination [*ghalaba*], as maintained by the Mu'tazila.[174] These doctrines are unacceptable because they are not in accordance with the sacred law [*shar'*], and nothing to support them has been handed down to us on the authority of any of the Companions [*ṣaḥāba*] and Successors [*tābi'ūn*],[175] the masters of tradition [*aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth*] among our righteous predecessors [*as-salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ*]. On the contrary, all the evidence that has been transmitted from them supports the case for the straightforward, literal expression [*iṭlāq*].

On the subject of the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He): "The All-Merciful has established Himself on the Throne [*ar-Raḥmānu 'ala'l-'arshi'stawā*]," Umm Salama, the wife of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), is reported as having transmitted the saying:

> Exactly how—that cannot be grasped by the human mind [*al-kaif ghair ma'qūl*]. But that He has 'established Himself' is not beyond our ken [*wa'l-istiwā' ghair majhūl*], so the affirmation of the fact is obligatory, and the negation of it amounts to unbelief [*kufr*].

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[170] The author actually uses the verbal noun *istiwā'* at this point in the Arabic text.

[171] The Mujassima are those who ascribe a corporeal nature [*jismiyya*, from *jism* = physical body] to the Creator. Those who advocate such anthropomorphic doctrines are also known as the Mushabbiha, 'the Assimilators.'

[172] The Karrāmiyya (or Kirāmiyya) are a particularly notorious sect of the Mushabbiha, called after Abū 'Abdi'llāh Muhammad ibn Karrām (or Karām, Kirām or Kirrām), who died in A.H. 255.

[173] The followers of the famous theologian, Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Ash'arī (A.H. 260–324), who is generally regarded as the founder of orthodox Islamic scholasticism [*kalām*]. His approach to theological problems found favor with many of the jurists, especially those of the Shāfi'ī school, but his method was not accepted by the followers of Imām Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal.

[174] For a certain period, the doctrines of the Mu'tazila were imposed as the official dogma of the Islamic State. Under the Caliphs al-Ma'mūn, al-Mu'tasim and al-Wāthiq (A.H. 218–234/833–849 C.E.), dissenting scholars were tried and persecuted by an inquisition [*miḥna*]. One notable victim of this persecution was Imām Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

[175] In his *Malfūẓāt* [Utterances], the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) says: "Of them [the people of the Lord] He has made firm anchors for the religion [*dīn*]. The senior rank among them is that of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), junior to this is the rank of the Companions [*ṣaḥāba*], and below this again is the rank of the Successors [*tābi'ūn*]. They always put what they say into practice, carrying it out in word and deed, in private and in public."

In his *Ṣaḥīḥ* [collection of authentic traditions], Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj has traced the transmission of this saying from her, as his authority for attributing it to [her husband] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). A similar version occurs in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) said, shortly before his death: "The traditional reports *[akhbār]* concerning the attributes *[ṣifāt]* [of Allāh] must simply be accepted as they have been handed down to us, without [erring in one direction by] giving them an anthropomorphic interpretation *[tashbīh]*,[176] and without [erring in the other direction by] negating the very existence of those attributes *[ta'ṭīl]*.[177]

He also said, according to the account of his teaching transmitted by some of his followers: "I am not a professor of theology *[ṣāḥib kalām]*,[178] and I do not see any value in making theological pronouncements on any of these subjects, except for what is stated in the Book of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), or in a tradition *[ḥadīth]* that has been handed down from the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace), or from his Companions [*aṣḥāb*] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all), or from the Successors [*tābiʿūn*]. As far as anything other than this is concerned, theological debate on the subject is not to be commended. The attributes of the Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) should therefore not be spoken about in terms of how and why. The only people who speak in such terms are the doubting skeptics [*shukkāk*]."

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[176] The literal meaning of *tashbīh* is 'likening, comparison.' In the context of Islamic theological debate *[kalām]*, it means 'anthropomorphization' or, in other words, the ascription of human characteristics to Allāh (Exalted is He). Those who profess this doctrine are known as al-Mushabbiha (see notes [171] and [172] above).

[177] The literal meaning of *ta'ṭīl* is 'neutralizing' or 'putting out of action.' As a technical term of Islamic theology, it means the denial of the very existence of the attributes *[ṣifāt]* of Allāh (Exalted is He), a doctrine in extreme opposition to that of *tashbīh*. Those who profess this doctrine are known as al-Mu'aṭṭila.

[178] The basic meaning of the word *kalām* is simply 'speech' or 'something spoken.' The phrase *Kalāmu'llāh*, which occurs in Qur'ān 2:75, 9:6 and 48:15, is understood to mean either the Qur'ān itself, or Allāh's attribute of Speech. More than two centuries had elapsed since the lifetime of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), before the scholastic theology of Islām reached the stage of its development at which it came to be known as *'ilm al-kalām*, 'the science of theological discourse,' with *mutakallim* as the corresponding term for 'theologian.' As Victor Danner explains (in his book *The Islamic Tradition—An Introduction*, Amity House, New York 1988; p. 143):

> "Islamic theology *(kalām)* did not arise until long after the community had gone through a number of intellectually unsettling experiences that called for some kind of response to defend the articles of faith derived from the Word of Allāh. In the early epoch of Islam, there was a sort of primitive theology that revolved around jurisprudence and the simple dogmas of the religion. It was sustained by numerous references to the Qur'ān and to the *ḥadīths* of the Prophet, but it was neither systematic nor speculative. It proved to be insufficient when the Islamic faith began to enter the troubled waters of rationalism a century or so after the death of the Prophet (632)."

Even in those 'troubled waters,' however, conservative traditionalists like Imām Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) remained unconvinced of the necessity for systematic and speculative *kalām*, preferring the more 'primitive' approach to theology.

It was on a different occasion, according to another account of his teaching, that Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) said: "We believe that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) is upon the Throne, however He wills [*kaifa shāʾa*] and just as He wills [*kamā shāʾa*], without reference to any definition or description that might be offered by someone attempting to describe or define."

[We believe this] because of what has been reported to us on the authority of Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib,[179] to the effect that Kaʿb al-Aḥbār once said: "Allāh (Exalted is He) has said in the Torah:

> I, Allāh, am above My servants, and My Throne is above the whole of My creation, and I am upon My Thone, whereon I regulate [the affairs of] My servants, and nothing pertaining to My servants is ever hidden from Me.[180]"

Indeed, the fact that He (Almighty and Glorious is He) is upon the Throne is mentioned in every Scripture that has been revealed [*fī kulli kitābin unzila*] to every Prophet who has been sent forth to deliver His message [*ʿalā kulli nabiyyin ursila*], without further explanation [*bi-lā kaif*].[181]

In all the records that are still available to us, Allāh (Exalted is He) is also characterized as possessing the attributes of Exaltedness [*ʿuluww*] and Omnipotence [*qudra*], as exercising control [*istīlāʾ*] and domination [*ghalaba*] over the whole of His creation from the Throne, and so on.

None of this, therefore, can be what is meant by His 'Self-establishment' [*istiwāʾ*]. Self-establishment must be one of the attributes of the Divine Essence [*ṣifāt adh-Dhāt*], since He has informed us of it, mentioned it explicitly, and stated it emphatically in seven verses [*āyāt*] of

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[179] There is some uncertainty as to the correct spelling of the last name of this early (d. A.H. 93) transmitter of Prophetic traditions. The forms ibn al-Musayyib and ibn al-Musayyab both occur, often in the same text.

[180] *Ana'llāhu fauqa ʿibādī—wa ʿarshī fauqa jamīʿi khalqī—wa ana ʿalā ʿarshī ʿalaihi udabbiru ʿibādī—wa lā yakhfā ʿalayya shaiʾun min ʿibādī.*

[181] Literally, 'without how.'

His Book,[182] and since this view is confirmed by the Prophetic tradition *[sunna maʾthūra]*. It must be an attribute *[ṣifa]* that is intrinsic to Him *[lāzima lahu]* and properly befitting Him *[lāʾiqa bihi]*, like the Hand *[yad]*, the Face *[wajh]*, the Eye *[ʿain]*, the Hearing *[samʿ]*, the Sight *[baṣar]*, the Life *[ḥayāt]* and the Power *[qudra]*, all of which are properly attributed to Him, as well as His being Creator *[Khāliq]*, Sustainer *[Rāziq]*, Giver of Life *[Muḥyin]* and Causer of Death *[Mumīt]*.

We do not depart from the Book and the Sunna. We read the Qurʾānic verse *[āya]* and the traditional report *[khabar]*. We believe what these two sources contain, and we entrust the detailed understanding *[kaifiyya]*[183] of the [divine] attributes to the knowledge *[ʿilm]* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). As Sufyān ibn ʿUyaina[184] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once put it: "Just as Allāh (Exalted is He) has described Himself in His Book." In other words, the reading of it is self-explanatory, and there is no need of further interpretative commentary *[tafsīr]*. This is all that is required of us, because the rest is a mystery *[ghaib]*, the comprehension of which is beyond the scope of the human mind *[ʿaql]*.

We beg Allāh (Exalted is He) to grant pardon *[ʿafw]* and well-being *[ʿāfiya]*, and we take refuge with Him in case we should say anything about Him or His attributes that we have not been taught by Him or by His Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[The believer must also acknowledge and be thoroughly convinced] that He (Exalted is He) descends each night to the heaven of this lower world *[samāʾ ad-dunyā]*, however He wills and just as He wills, and that He then forgives those who have sinned, erred, offended and disobeyed; those of His servants, that is to say, whom He chooses and wishes to forgive. Hallowed and Exalted is the All-High, the Most High *[tabāraka wa taʿāla'l-ʿAliyyu'l-Aʿlā]*.

> There is no god but He *[lā ilāha illā Hū]*. His are the Most Beautiful Names *[lahu'l-asmāʾu'l-ḥusnā]*. (20:8)

This is not to be understood as meaning the descent of [Allāh's] mercy *[nuzūl ar-raḥma]* and His spiritual reward *[thawāb]*, as maintained by the

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[182] Qurʾān 7:54, 10:3, 13:2, 20:5, 25:59, 32:4 and 57:4.

[183] Literally, the 'how-ness.' The abstract noun *kaifiyya* is formed by the addition of the termination *-iyya* to the adverb *kaif*, which means 'how' (or, as an interrogative, 'how?')

[184] Abū Muhammad Sufyān ibn ʿUyaina ibn Maimūn al-Hilālī (d. A.H. 196 or 198). A prominent early scholar of Qurʾān and Tradition.

Mu'tazila and the Ash'ariyya, because we know from the report transmitted by 'Ubāda ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Allāh (Hallowed and Exalted is He) descends each night to the heaven of this lower world, when the last third of the night is still remaining, and He says: "Is there anyone begging?" —so that He may grant him his request. "Is there anyone seeking forgiveness?" —so that He may forgive him. "Is there anyone held captive *['ānin]*?"—so that He may release him from his captivity. [This continues] until it is time for the dawn prayer to be performed, then our Lord (Hallowed and Exalted is He) ascends on high.

According to another traditional report *[riwāya]*, also on the authority of 'Ubāda ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> Allāh (Hallowed and Exalted is He) descends each night to the heaven of this lower world, when the last third of the night is still remaining, and He says: "Is there not one of My servants who will call upon Me, so that I may respond to him? Is there not someone, a person who has wronged himself *[ẓālim li-nafsih]*, who will call upon Me, so that I may forgive him? Is there not someone, a person who lacks the sustenance he needs, who will call upon Me, so that I may procure his sustenance for him? Is there not some victim of oppression *[maẓlūm]*, who will invoke My name, so that I may help him? Is there not someone held in captivity, who will call upon Me, so that I may release him?" He goes on like this until the dawn appears, and then He ascends to His Pedestal *[kursī]*.

This same tradition *[ḥadīth]* has been transmitted, with some differences in the wording, on the authority of Abū Huraira, Jābir and 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with them all). Versions of it have also been handed down from 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd, Abu'd-Dardā', Ibn 'Abbās and 'Ā'isha (may the good pleasure of Allāh be upon them), all of whom attribute the saying to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). This explains why they used to regard it as preferable to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* in the last part of the night, rather than in the first part of it.

As reported by Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth *[aṣ-Ṣiddīq]* (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) descends to the heaven of this lower world on the night of the middle of Sha'bān, and He then forgives every soul, excepting only the individual in whose heart there is malice *[shaḥnā']*, or the attribution of partners *[shirk]* to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said that he once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> When the first half of the night has elapsed, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) descends to the heaven of this lower world, and then He says: "Is there anyone seeking forgiveness, that I may forgive him? Is there anyone begging, that I may give to him? Is there anyone repenting, that I may relent toward him?" [This continues] until the early dawn *[fajr]* begins to break.

Somebody once said to Isḥāq ibn Rāhawaih: "What are these traditions *[aḥādīth]* you are relating, to the effect that Allāh (Exalted is He) descends to the lowest heaven? Does Allāh then rise up again? Does He move about?" Isḥāq replied by asking the questioner: "Would you say of Allāh (Exalted is He) that it is possible for Allāh to descend and to ascend, and to do so without moving about?" When the man gave the answer "Yes," Isḥāq went on to ask: "So why do you have a problem with this?"

Yaḥyā ibn Muʿīn once said: "If a Jahmī asks you: 'How does He descend?' you should reply by asking: 'How did He ascend?'" As for al-Fuḍail ibn ʿIyāḍ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), he offered this advice: "If a Jahmī[185] tells you: 'I am a disbeliever *[kāfir]* in a Lord who is supposed to descend,' you should say to him: 'I am a believer *[mu'min]* in a Lord who does whatever He wills.'"

When somebody once told Shuraik ibn ʿAbdi'llāh (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "We have here a group of people who refuse to accept these traditions *[aḥādīth]*," he is said to have replied: "Has anyone handed down to us [reports transmitted by] names that cannot be traced back to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)? [It is from these traditions that we have learned the rules of] the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, the fast *[ṣiyām]*, the alms-due *[zakāt]* and the pilgrimage *[ḥajj]*, and through these traditions we have acquired knowledge *[ʿarafnā]* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)."

[185] A follower of Jahm ibn Ṣafwān Abū Muḥriz, who was put to death in the year A.H. 128/745–6 C.E. for having supported the insurrection of Ḥārith ibn Suraij, "the man with the black banner," in the province of Khurāsān. As a theologian, he adopted an independent approach to many of the major issues of debate, but he agreed with the Muʿtazila in carrying opposition to the anthropomorphic tendency *[tashbīh]* to the extreme of *taʿṭīl* [absolute denial of the attributes of Allāh]. As a distinctly separate school of Islamic theology, the Jahmiyya did not survive beyond the fifth Islamic century, when they adopted the doctrines of the Ashʿariyya.

On the doctrine that the Qur'ān is the Speech of Allāh *[Kalāmu'llāh]*.

We are firmly convinced that the Qur'ān is the Speech of Allāh *[Kalāmu'llāh]*, His Book *[Kitāb]*, His Verbal Communication *[Khiṭāb]* and His Inspired Revelation *[Waḥy]*, which Gabriel brought down to His Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

As Allāh has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> [Truly it is the revelation of the Lord of All the Worlds,] which the Faithful Spirit has brought down upon your heart, that you may be one of the warners, in plain Arabic language. (26:192–195)[186]

It is that which Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) delivered to his Community *[Umma]*, in obedient fulfillment of the commandment of the Lord of All the Worlds, in accordance with His saying (Exalted is He):

> O Messenger, deliver that which has been sent down to you from your Lord. (5:67)[187]

Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said: "The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would present himself to the people at the Place of Standing,[188] and he would say: 'Is there any man here who will convey me to his own people, since [the tribe of] Quraish have prevented me from delivering the Speech *[Kalām]* of my Lord?'"

The Speech of Allāh (Exalted is He) is the Noble Qur'ān, which is uncreated *[ghair makhlūq]*, however it may be read, recited aloud, or written down, and however it may be differentiated in the way it is read by an individual reader *[qāri']*, in the way it is pronounced by someone with a particular pronunciation *[lāfiẓ]*, and in the way it is memorized by an individual memorizer *[ḥāfiẓ]*.

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[186] *[wa innahu la-tanzīlu Rabbi'l-'ālamīn]—nazala bihi'r-Rūhu'l-Amīn—'alā qalbika li-takūna mina'l-mundhirīn—bi-lisānin 'arabiyyin mubīn.*

[187] *yā ayyuha'r-Rasūlu balligh mā unzila ilaika min Rabbik.*

[188] The *mawqif*, the site at 'Arafa where the rite of 'standing' *[wuqūf]* is performed during the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*.

It is the Speech of Allāh *[Kalāmu'llāh]*, and one of the attributes of His Essence *[ṣifa min ṣifāt Dhātih]*. It has not been invented *[muḥdath]*, nor has it been altered *[mubaddal]* or changed *[mughayyar]*. It has not been compiled *[mu'allaf]*, nor has it been abridged *[manqūṣ]*. It has not been fabricated *[maṣnū']*, nor does it contain anything that is redundant *[mazād]*. From Him began its revelation,[189] and unto Him is due in return the proper observance of its legislation *[ḥukm]*.

As the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said, according to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> The superiority of the Qur'ān above all other speech *[kalām]* is like the superiority of Allāh Himself above the whole of His creation.

This is because the Noble Qur'ān has emanated from Him (Hallowed and Exalted is He), and unto Him is due in return the proper observance of its legislation *[ḥukm]*. In other words, its being sent down and its becoming manifest [here in this world] originated from Him (Almighty and Glorious is He), and unto Him is due in return the proper observance of its legislation *[ḥukm]*, meaning that the religious obligations *['ibādāt]* prescribed therein must be fulfilled, by carrying out the commandments *[awāmir]* and by refraining from any violation of the prohibitions *[nawāhī]*.

It is for His sake that what is commanded must be performed, and that what is forbidden must be avoided, since the laws *[aḥkām]* belong to Him (Almighty and Glorious is He). As it has been stated: "From Him it was originally brought forth in terms of legislation *[ḥukman]*, and to Him it refers back in terms of cognizance *['ilman]*."

The Qur'ān is the Speech of Allāh *[Kalāmu'llāh]*, whether it be within the breasts of those who memorize it by heart, on the tongues of those who pronounce it aloud, in the hands of those who inscribe it in writing, in the sight of those who set eyes upon it, in all the copies *[maṣāḥif]* belonging to the people of Islām, and on the slates *[alwāḥ]* of young students; wherever it may be seen and found.

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[189] Literally, 'the sending down of it' *[tanzīluhu]*.

If a person maintains that the Qur'ān is a product of creation *[makhlūq]*, or that it is merely a metaphorical statement *['ibāra]*, or that the act of recitation *[tilāwa]* is [a product of creation], even if that which is recited *[matluww]* is not, or if he says: "My utterance of the Qur'ān is a product of creation,"[190] that person is a disbeliever *[kāfir]* in Allāh the Almighty *[al-'Aẓīm]*. Such a person is not fit to be treated as a social acquaintance, as someone with whom one might share a meal, as someone to whom a woman could be given in marriage, or as a neighbor. On the contrary, he deserves only to be shunned and despised. The ritual prayer is not to be performed *[lā yuṣallā]* behind him. His testimony *[shahāda]* is not acceptable as legal evidence. His guardianship *[walāya]* is invalid, so he cannot contract a marriage on behalf of his ward. The ritual prayer is not to be performed over him when he dies. If he can be brought under control, therefore, he should be given three opportunities to repent, like the apostate *[murtadd]*. Then, if he does repent, [well and good,] but if not, he must suffer the penalty of death.

Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was asked about a person who says: "My utterance of the Qur'ān is a product of creation." The Imām replied: "That person is guilty of unbelief *[kafara]*." He also said (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "If a person maintains that the Qur'ān, as the Speech of Allāh, is not a product of creation, but that the recitation of it is a product of creation *[at-tilāwa makhlūqa]*, he is guilty of unbelief."

According to a traditional report, Abu'd-Dardā' (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about the nature of the Qur'ān, so he told him:

> The Speech of Allāh is not a product of creation *[Kalāmu'llāhi ghairu makhlūq]*.

'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Abd al-Ghaffār was a freedman *[mawlā]* who owed his emancipation from slavery to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). According to a report attributed to him, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Allāh Himself (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> His indeed are the creation *[khalq]* and the command *[amr]*.

Thus He has drawn a distinction between the creation and the command. If His [word of] command, namely "Be! *[kun]*," with which

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[190] *lafẓī bi'l-Qur'āni makhlūq*.

On the importance of having the necessary capacity and ability before attempting to perform these duties.

When we state that possession of the appropriate capacity and ability is a necessary precondition for the discharging of these duties, our assertion is based on a traditional report, according to which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If it ever happens that a group of people have in their midst a man who commits sinful offenses, and they are capable of correcting his behavior, yet they do not act accordingly, Allāh will surely overwhelm them with chastisement before they repent.

Thus we see that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) made this a precondition. What it amounts to is that the people of righteousness *[ahl aṣ-ṣalāḥ]* must have the upper hand, that the ruler *[sulṭān]* must be devoted to justice and that the good folk must support him.

If a person finds himself in a situation where to criticize a wrong would mean putting his life at risk, as well as attracting injury to his person and his property, he is under no obligation to do so, in view of the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> And cast not yourselves by your own hands into destruction. (2:195)

And because of His words (Exalted is He):

> And do not kill yourselves. (4:29)

There is also the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> It is not appropriate for the believer *[mu'min]* to degrade himself.

Someone asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, how could he degrade himself?" and he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> He should not embark on something he cannot accomplish.

Of course, the people only got to hear it as it was recited by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and as he uttered it, so his utterance of the Qurʾān is indeed the Qurʾān [*fa-lafẓuhu bi'l-Qurʾāni huwa'l-Qurʾān*]. Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) commended the jinn who listened to the recitation of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Say [O Muḥammad]: "It has been revealed to me that a company of the jinn gave ear, then they said: 'We have indeed heard a marvelous Qurʾān, guiding to righteousness, so we believe in it, and we shall never associate anyone as a partner with our Lord.'" (72:1,2).
>
> And when We turned toward you a company of the jinn, who wished to hear the Qurʾān.... (46:29)

Allāh has also called the recitation of the Qurʾān by Gabriel (peace be upon him) a Qurʾān, for [to him] He said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

> Move not your tongue with it to hasten it. Ours it is to gather it together, and to recite it [*inna ʿalainā jamʿahu wa qurʾānah*]. So, when We recite it, follow its recitation [*fa-idhā qaraʾnāhu fa-'ttabiʿ qurʾānah*]. (75:16–18)
>
> Therefore recite of the Qurʾān that which is easy for you. (73:20)[194]

The Muslims are in unanimous agreement on both of the following points: (1) When a person recites the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] in the course of performing a ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], he is the reciter [*qāriʾ*] of the Book of Allāh. (2) If a person solemnly swears [*ḥalafa*] that he will not speak, and then proceeds to recite the Qurʾān, he is not breaking his oath. This goes to prove that [the statement that the Qurʾān is the Speech of Allāh] is not just a figurative expression [*ʿibāra*].

According to the tradition [*ḥadīth*] of Muʿāwiya ibn al-Ḥakam (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> In this ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] of ours, there is no rightful place for any element of the speech of human beings [*kalām al-ādamiyyīn*]. There can only be recitation [*qirāʾa*], the glorification of the Lord [*tasbīḥ*],[195] the affirmation that there is no god but Allāh [*tahlīl*],[196] and the reading aloud [*tilāwa*] of the Qurʾān.

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[194] This verse [*āya*] continues:

> He knows that some of you are sick, while others are traveling in the land in search of Allāh's bounty, and yet others are fighting for the cause of Allāh. So recite of it that which is easy [for you].

[195] During the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], the glorification of the Lord [*tasbīḥ*] is uttered each time the worshipper adopts the postures of bowing [*rukūʿ*] and prostration [*sujūd*]. While adopting the bowing posture, one says: "*Subḥāna Rabbiya'l-ʿAẓīm* [Glory to my Lord, the Almighty!]" and when in prostration: "*Subḥāna Rabbiya'l-Aʿlā* [Glory to my Lord, the Most High!]"

[196] *Tahlīl* means repeating "*Lā ilāha illa'llāh* [There is no god but Allāh]."

He has thus informed us that the reading is identical with that which is read *[at-tilāwa hiya'l-matluww]*. Allāh (Exalted is He) and His Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) have commanded the believers to recite [the Qur'ān] during the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and yet they have forbidden the use of [human] speech. It must follow, therefore, that if our [recitation of the] Qur'ān were in fact our own speech, not the Speech of Allāh, we would be guilty of violating the prohibition that applies to the ritual prayer.

On the doctrine that the Qur᾽ān consists of intelligible letters and audible sounds.

We are firmly convinced that the Qur᾽ān consists of intelligible letters *[ḥurūf mafhūma]* and audible sounds *[aṣwāt masmūʿa]*, because it is through these that any person, who would otherwise be mute and speechless, becomes an articulate speaker *[mutakalliman nāṭiqan]*, and the Speech of Allāh *[Kalāmu'llāh]* (Almighty and Glorious is He) is not exceptional in this regard. Anyone who rejects this belief must therefore be stubbornly irrational and blind to the obvious.

Allāh Himself (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> *Alif Lām Mīm*. That is the Book.... (2:1,2)[197]
>
> *Ḥā Mīm*. The sending down of the Book is from Allāh.... (40:1,2)[198]
>
> *Ṭā Sīn Mīm*. Those are the signs *[āyāt]* of the lucid Book. (26:1,2)[199]

Thus He has mentioned certain letters [of the Arabic alphabet] and He has used them metonymically, as a way of alluding to the Book itself. He has also said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> And even if all the trees in the earth were pens, and the sea, with seven seas after it to replenish it, [were ink], the Words of Allāh would still not be exhausted. (31:27)

Thus He has clearly assigned to Himself such a multitude of words *[kalimāt]* that they are infinite in number. The same message is conveyed by His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> Say: "If the sea were ink for the Words of my Lord, the sea would be used up before the Words of my Lord were exhausted." (18:109)

[197] The Arabic letters *Alif Lām Mīm* also occur in 3:1, 29:1, 30:1, 31:1 and 32:1.

[198] The Arabic letters *Ḥā Mīm* also occur in 41:1, 42:1, 43:1, 44:1, 45:1 and 46:1. In the case of 42:1, they are immediately followed (in 42:2) by the letters *ʿAin Sīn Qāf*.

[199] The Arabic letters *Ṭā Sīn Mīm* also occur in Qur᾽ān 28:1.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> Read the Qur'ān, for you will surely be rewarded for doing so. For every particle of grammar [you will receive the reward of] ten good deeds. I suppose I should not call [the group of three abstract letters] *Alif Lām Mīm* a 'particle' *[ḥarf]*,[200] yet the *Alif* is worth ten, the *Lām* is worth ten, and the *Mīm* is worth ten, so it all adds up to thirty!

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> The Qur'ān has been revealed according to seven modes of reading *[aḥruf]*,[201] each of them perfectly acceptable.

About Moses (peace be upon him), Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> And when your Lord called to Moses.... (26:10)
>
> We called to him from the right side of the Mount, and We brought him near in communion. (19:52)

It was to Moses (peace be upon him) that He said (Exalted is He):

> I am indeed Allāh; there is no god but I; so worship Me. (20:14)[202]

None of this could have happened without the sound of a voice *[ṣawt]*, and it is inconceivable that this call *[nidā']*, this name *[ism]* and this attribute *[ṣifa]* could belong to anyone but Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). They could not belong to the angels, nor to any other created beings.

According to a report transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When it is the Day of Resurrection, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will arrive in shadows of clouds, then He will speak in fluent and eloquent speech *[bi-kalām ṭaliq wa dhaliq]*, and He will say (He being the Most Truthful of sayers! *[wa Huwa Aṣdaqu'l-qā'ilīn]*):
>
> "Pay attention, for it has been such a long, long time that I have paid attention to all of you! Ever since I created you, I have been observing your deeds and

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[200] In many contexts, the Arabic word *ḥarf* means 'a letter of the alphabet.' As a grammatical term, it means a 'particle,' i.e., a meaningful element of the Arabic language that is neither a noun nor a verb. In the unvoweled Arabic script, many particles do in fact appear as single consonant letters. (For yet another meaning of the word *ḥarf*, see the note immediately following.)

[201] The word *ḥarf*, of which the plural form *aḥruf* occurs in this saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), may also mean 'a dialect, an idiom, or a mode of expression, peculiar to certain of the Arabs.' Some authorities have therefore understood the seven *aḥruf* as referring to the dialects of Quraish, Ṭayy, Hawāzin, Yaman, Thaqīf, Hudhail and Tamīm. Others have preferred the interpretation: 'The Qur'ān has been revealed according to seven modes of reading,' namely those adopted by seven of the most celebrated Qur'ān-readers *[qurrā']*: Nāfi', Ibn Kathīr, Abu 'Amr al-'Alā', Ibn 'Āmir, Abū Bakr 'Āṣim, Ḥamza and al-Kisā'ī.

[202] *innī Ana'llāhu lā ilāha illā Ana fa-'budnī.*

> listening to your words, so these are nothing but your own records *[ṣaḥā'if]* that are about to be read out to you. If anyone finds something good in them, let him praise Allāh, and if anyone finds something other than that, well, he really has no one but himself to blame!"

In his *Ṣaḥīḥ*,[203] al-Bukhārī records a report, complete with its chain of transmitting authorities *[isnād]*, according to which ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Anas (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that he once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> Allāh (Glory be to Him) will gather all His servants at the Resurrection, so [when that time comes] He will summon them by calling out, in a voice that will be heard by those who are far away, just as clearly as it is heard by those who are close at hand: "I am the King *[Ana'l-Malik]*! I am the Judge *[Ana'd-Dayyān]*!"

According to a report from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad al-Muḥāribī, on the authority of al-Aʿmash, who handed it down from Muslim ibn Masrūq, the following statement can be traced back as far as ʿAbdu'llāh [ibn Anas] (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

"When Allāh utters the revelation *[waḥy]*, the sound of His voice will be heard by the inhabitants of heaven, so they will fall down in prostration, until, when the terror is lifted from their hearts *[fuzziʿa ʿan qulūbihim]* (he actually said 'is eased from their hearts' *[sukkina ʿan qulūbihim]*),[204] the inhabitants of heaven will cry out: 'What was it that your Lord said?' They will say: 'The Truth *[al-Ḥaqq]*. He said such and such' (mentioning the content of the revelation)."

According to a report transmitted on the authority of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn al-Ḥārith, Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "When Allāh (Hallowed and Exalted is He) utters the revelation *[takallama bi'l-waḥy]*, the inhabitants of the heavens will hear a sound like the sound of iron falling on the rocks, so they will bow down low in prostration before Him. Then, when the terror is lifted from their hearts, they will say: 'What was it that your Lord said?' They will say: 'The Truth! And He is the All-High, the All-Great *[wa Huwa'l-ʿAliyyu'l-Kabīr]*.'"[205]

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[203] A famous collection of authenticated traditions *[aḥādīth]*.

[204] Due to the absence of quotation marks (not to mention most other forms of punctuation!) in the Arabic text, it is rather difficult to know for certain, in a passage like this, just who is saying what. The phrase "until when the terror is lifted *[fuzziʿa]* from their hearts" is from Qur'ān 34:23. Presumably, therefore, the following sentence is a parenthetic remark, informing the reader that the reporter actually used a partial paraphrase of the Qur'ānic expression.

[205] The words "'What was it that your Lord said?' They will say: 'The Truth!' And He is the All-High, the All-Great" are from Qur'ān 34:23.

Muḥammad ibn Ka'b once said: "The Children of Israel said to Moses (peace be upon him): 'To what in this created universe would you compare the sound of your Lord's voice when He spoke to you?' He replied: 'I would compare the sound of my Lord's voice to the sound of thunder when it does not set off an echo.'"

These Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]* and traditional reports *[akhbār]* all point to the fact that the Speech of Allāh *[Kalāmu'llāh]* is a sound quite unlike the sound of the human voice *[ṣawt al-ādamiyyīn]*. Just as His Knowledge *['ilm]*, His Power *[qudra]*, and all the rest of His attributes *[ṣifāt]* bear no resemblance to the attributes of human beings, so it is with His Voice.

Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has stated emphatically that the Speech of Allāh is an actual sound, in accordance with the traditional doctrine handed down by a majority of the Companions *[Aṣḥāb]* (may Allāh be well pleased with them), and contrary to the opinion of the Ash'ariyya, who maintain that the Speech of Allāh *[Kalāmu'llāh]* is a self-sufficient spiritual concept *[ma'nan qā'im bi-nafsih]*. Allāh is the Requiter *[Ḥasīb]* of every heretical innovator *[mubtadi']* who goes astray and leads others astray!

Allāh (Glory be to Him) has never desisted from speaking *[lam yazal mutakalliman]*, and His Speech comprises all the nuances of meaningful expression, including the positive imperative *[amr]*, the negative imperative *[nahy]* and the interrogative *[istikhbār]*.

Ibn Khuzaima (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has said:

"The Speech of Allāh (Exalted is He) is an uninterrupted flow, in which there is no interval of silence and no modulation of sound."

Somebody once said to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "Is it permissible for you to say that Allāh (Exalted is He) is One who speaks, although it is possible for Him to lapse into silence?" To this he replied (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "We confine ourselves to the statement that Allāh (Exalted is He) has never desisted from speaking. If the tradition *[khabar]* had informed us of His ever having lapsed into silence, we would have formulated our doctrine accordingly. As it is, we maintain that He is One who speaks however He wills, without attempting any definition *[bi-lā kaif]*, and without drawing any anthropomorphic comparison *[bi-lā tashbīh]*."

On the doctrine that the letters of the alphabet *[ḥurūf al-muʿjam]* are likewise uncreated.[206]

The letters of the alphabet *[ḥurūf al-muʿjam]* are likewise uncreated *[ghair makhlūqa]*, and this statement applies equally to the Speech of Allāh and to human speech.

A few members of the orthodox Muslim community *[ahl as-Sunna]* have maintained that these letters are eternally preexistent *[qadīma]* as they occur in the Noble Qur'ān, but newly created *[muḥdatha]* in all other cases. This is an error on their part. The correct statement is the one first mentioned above, which can in fact be said to represent the normal doctrine *[madhhab]* of the entire orthodox community, and which is based on the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> His command, when He intends a thing, is to say to it "Be *[kun]*," and it is *[fa-yakūn]*. (36:82)

The word *kun* consists of two [consonant] letters *[ḥarfān]*.[207] So, if *k-n* had been a product of creation, there would necessarily have been another *k-n*, by which it would have been created, and so on *ad infinitum*.

We have already cited many Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]* that serve to prove our point, so we shall not repeat them yet again. As far as evidence from the Sunna is concerned, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said to ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, when he was asked about *alif*, *bā'*, *tā'*, *thā'*, and so on,[208] through to the last of the letters [of the Arabic alphabet]:

> The letter *alif* comes from one of the Names of Allāh, and the Name in question is *Allāh*. The *bā'* comes from one of the Names of Allāh, and the

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[206] Other terms for the Arabic alphabet include *ḥurūf al-hijā'*, *ḥurūf at-tahajjī*, *al-ḥurūf al-hijā'iyya*, and *ḥurūf al-abjad* or simply *al-abjad*. (Several of these occur further along in the present text, as the reader will notice.)

[207] In the Arabic script, only the consonant letters are normally written. If shown at all, the vowels appear as extra signs marked above or below the line of consonants. Thus the Arabic word meaning "Be!" is written simply as *kn*, although it is read as *kun*. (In the Arabic script, it should also be noted, there is no distinction corresponding to that which exists between 'upper case' and 'lower case' in scripts derived from the Roman alphabet.)

> Name in question is *al-Bāri'* [the Maker]. The *tā'* comes from one of the Names of Allāh, and the Name in question is *al-Mutakabbir* [the Majestic]. The *thā'* comes from two of the Names of Allāh, and the Names in question are *al-Bā'ith* [the Resurrector] and *al-Wārith* [the Inheritor]....

He continued in this vein until he came to the end of the alphabet. Thus the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) derived each of the letters in turn from the Names *[asmā']* and Attributes *[ṣifāt]* of Allāh—and His Names (Almighty and Glorious is He) are not products of creation!

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of 'Alī (may Allāh ennoble his countenance), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to him, when he had asked about the meaning of *abjad, hawwaz, ḥuṭṭī*, and so on to the end of the alphabet:[209]

> O 'Alī, are you not familiar with the commentary *[tafsīr]* of Abū Jād?[210] The letter *alif* comes from one of the Names of Allāh, and the Name in question is *Allāh*. The *bā'* comes from one of the Names of Allāh, and the Name in question is *al-Bāri'* [the Maker]. The *jīm* comes from one of the Names of Allāh, and the Name in question is *al-Jalīl* [the Splendid]....

He continued in this vein until he came to the end of the alphabet. Thus the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) derived each of the letters in turn from the Names *[asmā']* of Allāh—and these very same letters occur in the speech of human beings!

Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has declared belief in the eternal preexistence *[qidam]* of the letters of the alphabet *[ḥurūf al-hijā']* to be an article of faith, for he said, in his

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[208] In this version of the Arabic alphabet, which is also the one most commonly used in modern times, the letters (after *alif*, which stands alone at the beginning) are grouped in sets according to the similarity of their written shape.

Thus *bā'*, *tā'*, and *thā'* are identical in their basic form, and are distinguished only by the addition of dots (one dot below the line for *bā'*, two dots above for *tā'*, and three dots above for *thā'*.) The complete sequence of letters in this alphabet is as follows: *alif, bā', tā', thā', jīm, ḥā', khā', dāl, dhāl, rā', zāy, sīn, shīn, ṣād, ḍād, ṭā', ẓā', 'ain, ghain, fā', qāf, kāf, lām, mīm, nūn, hā', wāw, yā'*.

[209] This represents a more ancient arrangement of the letters of the Arabic alphabet (which is still used for certain purposes of notation and numeration). The order of the letters corresponds to that of the old Phoenician, Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and Latin alphabets, with the addition of six extra letters.

Unlike the *alif-bā'-tā'-thā'* sequence mentioned in the immediately preceding footnote, this version of the alphabet is recited, not letter by letter, but as a series of eight words, most commonly pronounced as follows: *abjad, hawwaz, ḥuṭṭī, kalaman, sa'faṣ, qarashat, thakhadh, ḍaẓagh*.

[210] The name Abū Jād, 'the father of Jād,' is a humorous personification of *abjad* (or *abujad*, as it is sometimes pronounced in the recitation of this form of the alphabet.)

epistle *[risāla]* to the people of Nīsābūr and Jurjān:[211] "If anyone maintains that the letters of the alphabet *[ḥurūf at-tahajjī]* are newly invented *[muḥdatha]*, that person is a disbeliever *[kāfir]* in Allāh, and when he makes the pronouncement that these are products of creation, he is actually asserting that the Qur'ān itself is a product of creation *[makhlūq]*."

Somebody once told the Imām (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) that a certain person had been saying: "When Allāh (Exalted is He) created the letters, the *lām* leaned over in prostration, while the *alif* held itself erect[212] and said: 'I shall not prostrate myself *[lā asjudu]* until I am commanded to do so.'" Aḥmad responded to this by saying: "The person who has been saying this is guilty of unbelief *[kufr]*."

Imām ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has said: "Do not profess the novel invention *[ḥudūth]* of the letters, for the Jews *[Yahūd]* were the first to perish for maintaining this [false doctrine]. If someone professes the novel invention of any letter of the alphabet, he is actually professing the novel invention of the Qur'ān itself."

The only cases to be argued are the following: (1) Supposing it is maintained that the letters are eternally pre-existent *[qadīma]* as they occur in the Qur'ān, they must necessarily be eternally pre-existent as they occur in all other contexts, since it is inconceivable for one and the same thing to be both eternally preexistent and newly invented. (2) Suppose someone maintains that they are newly invented *[muḥdatha]* as they occur in the Qur'ān. In this case, we have already cited the proofs of their eternal preexistence *[qidam]* in the Qur'ān. So, once this has been established in the context of the Qur'ān, it must hold true in other contexts as well.

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[211] Nīsābūr and Jurjān are the Arabicized forms of the Persian Nishāpūr and Gurgān. Nishāpūr, the City of Shāpūr, is one of the capitals of Khurāsān, while Gurgān is a town and district near the south-east corner of the Caspian sea.

[212] In the Arabic script, the word *lā* (meaning 'no' or 'not,' depending on the context) is spelled with a reclining *lām* and an upright *alif*.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> Read the Qur'ān, for you will surely be rewarded for doing so. For every particle of grammar [you will receive the reward of] ten good deeds. I suppose I should not call [the group of three abstract letters] *Alif Lām Mīm* a 'particle' *[ḥarf]*,[200] yet the *Alif* is worth ten, the *Lām* is worth ten, and the *Mīm* is worth ten, so it all adds up to thirty!

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> The Qur'ān has been revealed according to seven modes of reading *[aḥruf]*,[201] each of them perfectly acceptable.

About Moses (peace be upon him), Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> And when your Lord called to Moses.... (26:10)
>
> We called to him from the right side of the Mount, and We brought him near in communion. (19:52)

It was to Moses (peace be upon him) that He said (Exalted is He):

> I am indeed Allāh; there is no god but I; so worship Me. (20:14)[202]

None of this could have happened without the sound of a voice *[ṣawt]*, and it is inconceivable that this call *[nidā']*, this name *[ism]* and this attribute *[ṣifa]* could belong to anyone but Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). They could not belong to the angels, nor to any other created beings.

According to a report transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When it is the Day of Resurrection, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will arrive in shadows of clouds, then He will speak in fluent and eloquent speech *[bi-kalām ṭaliq wa dhaliq]*, and He will say (He being the Most Truthful of sayers! *[wa Huwa Aṣdaqu'l-qā'ilīn]*):
>
> "Pay attention, for it has been such a long, long time that I have paid attention to all of you! Ever since I created you, I have been observing your deeds and

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[200] In many contexts, the Arabic word *ḥarf* means 'a letter of the alphabet.' As a grammatical term, it means a 'particle,' i.e., a meaningful element of the Arabic language that is neither a noun nor a verb. In the unvoweled Arabic script, many particles do in fact appear as single consonant letters. (For yet another meaning of the word *ḥarf*, see the note immediately following.)

[201] The word *ḥarf*, of which the plural form *aḥruf* occurs in this saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), may also mean 'a dialect, an idiom, or a mode of expression, peculiar to certain of the Arabs.' Some authorities have therefore understood the seven *aḥruf* as referring to the dialects of Quraish, Ṭayy, Ḥawāzin, Yaman, Thaqīf, Hudhail and Tamīm. Others have preferred the interpretation: 'The Qur'ān has been revealed according to seven modes of reading,' namely those adopted by seven of the most celebrated Qur'ān-readers *[qurrā']*: Nāfi', Ibn Kathīr, Abū 'Amr al-'Alā', Ibn 'Āmir, Abū Bakr 'Āṣim, Ḥamza and al-Kisā'ī.

[202] *innī Ana'llāhu lā ilāha illā Ana fa-'budnī*.

Yā Tawwāb	O Ever-Relenting One!
Yā Baṣīr	O All-Seeing One!
Yā Wāsi‘	O All-Embracing One!
Yā Badī‘	O Incomparable One!
Yā Ra’ūf	O Benign One!
Yā Shākir	O Appreciative One!
Yā Allāh	O Allāh!
Yā Wāḥid	O Unique One!
Yā Ghafūr	O All-Forgiving One!
Yā Ḥakīm	O All-Wise One!
Yā Qābiḍ	O Constrictor!
Yā Bāsiṭ	O Expander!
Lā ilāha illā Hū	There is no god but He![215]
Yā Ḥayy	O Ever-Living One!
Yā Qayyūm	O Eternally Self-Sustaining One!
Yā ‘Aliyy	O All-High!
Yā ‘Aẓīm	O Magnificent One!
Yā Waliyy	O Protecting Friend!
Yā Ghaniyy	O Self-Sufficing One!
Yā Ḥamīd	O Praiseworthy One!

In *Āl ‘Imrān* [Sūra 3, "The Family of ‘Imrān"] there are four Names:

Yā Qā’im	O Self-Subsisting One!
Yā Wahhāb	O Ever-Giving One!
Yā Sarī‘	O Swift One!
Yā Khabīr	O All-Aware One!

In *Sūrat an-Nisā’* [Sūra 4, "Women"] there are six Names:

Yā Raqīb	O Ever-Watchful One!
Yā Ḥasīb	O Reckoner!
Yā Shahīd	O Witness!
Yā Ghafūr	O Ever-Forgiving One!
Yā Muqīt	O Sustainer!
Yā Wakīl	O Trustee!

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[215] The Arabic term *ism* (plural: *asmā’*) can usually be translated quite satisfactorily by the English word 'name,' but its meaning is sometimes closer to 'denominative expression,' since it can be applied—as here—to a whole phrase or sentence.

In *al-An‘ām* [Sūra 6, “Cattle”] there are five Names:

Yā Fāṭir	O Originator!
Yā Qāhir	O Irresistible One!
Yā Qādir	O All-Capable One!
Yā Laṭīf	O Subtle One!
Yā Khabīr	O All-Aware One!

In *al-A‘rāf* [Sūra 7, “The Heights”] there are two Names:

Yā Muḥyī	O Giver of Life!
Yā Mumīt	O Causer of Death!

In *al-Anfāl* [Sūra 8, “The Spoils of War”] there are two Names:

Yā Ni‘ma’l-Mawlā	O Patron Most Excellent!
Yā Ni‘ma’n-Naṣīr	O Helper Most Excellent!

In *Hūd* [Sūra 11, “*Hūd*”][216] there are seven Names:

Yā Ḥafīẓ	O Preserver!
Yā Raqīb	O Ever-Watchful One!
Yā Majīd	O Glorious One!
Yā Qawiyy	O Strong One!
Yā Mujīb	O Responsive One!
Yā Wadūd	O Ever-Loving One!
Yā Fa‘‘āl	O Ever-Active One!

In *ar-Ra‘d* [Sūra 13, “The Thunder”] there are two Names:

Yā Kabīr	O Supremely Great One!
Yā Muta‘āl	O Most Exalted One!

In *Ibrāhīm* [Sūra 14, “Abraham”] there is one Name:

Yā Mannān	O Most Beneficent One!

In *al-Ḥijr* [Sūra 15, “*Al-Ḥijr*”[217]] there is one Name:

Yā Khallāq	O Creator of all things!

In *an-Naḥl* [Sūra 16, “The Bee”] there is one Name:

Yā Bā‘ith	O Resurrector!

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[216] Hūd, of the tribe of ‘Ād, was one of the Prophets of Arabia (peace be upon them) who are not mentioned in the Hebrew scriptures.

[217] “*Al-Ḥijr*,” the title of Sūra 15, is generally assumed to be a place-name.

In *Maryam* [Sūra 19, "Mary"] there are two Names:

Yā Ṣādiq	O Truthful One!
Yā Wārith	O Inheritor!

In *al-Mu’minīn* [Sūra 23, "The Believers"] there is one Name:

Yā Karīm	O Ever-Generous One!

In *an-Nūr* [Sūra 24, "Light"] there are three Names:

Yā Ḥaqq	O Truth!
Yā Matīn	O Firm One!
Yā Nūr	O Light!

In *al-Furqān* [Sūra 25, "The Criterion"] there is one Name:

Yā Hādī	O Guide!

In *Saba’* [Sūra 34, "Sheba"] there is one Name:

Yā Fattāḥ	O Opener!

In *al-Mu’min* [Sūra 40, "The Believer"][218] there are four Names:

Yā Ghāfir	O Pardoning One!
Yā Qābil	O Accepting One!
Yā Shadīd	O Stern One!
Yā Dha'ṭ-Ṭawl	O Lord of Bounty!

In *adh-Dhāriyāt* [Sūra 51, "The Winnowing Winds"] there are three Names:

Yā Razzāq	O Provider!
Yā Dha'l-Quwwa	O Lord of Mighty Strength!
Yā Matīn	O Firm One!

In *aṭ-Ṭūr* [Sūra 52, "The Mount"] there is one Name:

Yā Mannān	O Most Beneficent One!

In *Iqtarabati's-Sā‘a* [Sūra 54, "The Hour has drawn nigh"][219] there is one Name:

Yā Muqtadir	O Omnipotent One!

[218] Sūra 40 is sometimes entitled *Ghāfir* ["Pardoning"].

[219] The customary title of Sūra 54, which is identified here by the opening words of its first verse, is *al-Qamar* ["The Moon"].

In *ar-Raḥmān* [Sūra 55, "The All-Merciful"] there are three:

Yā Bāqī	O Everlasting One!
Yā Dha'l-Jalāl	O Lord of Majesty!
Yā Dha'l-Ikrām	O Lord of Glory!

In *al-Ḥadīd* [Sūra 57, "Iron"] there are four Names:

Yā Awwal	O First!
Yā Ākhir	O Last!
Yā Ẓāhir	O Outwardly Manifest!
Yā Bāṭin	O Inwardly Concealed!

In *al-Ḥashr* [Sūra 59, "The Mustering"][220] there are ten Names:

Yā Quddūs	O Most Holy One!
Yā Salām	O Source of Peace!
Yā Muʼmin	O Guardian of Faith!
Yā Muhaimin	O Protector!
Yā ʻAzīz	O Almighty One!
Yā Jabbār	O All-Compelling One!
Yā Mutakabbir	O Majestic One!
Yā Khāliq	O Creator!
Yā Bāriʼ	O Maker!
Yā Muṣawwir	O Shaper!

In *al-Burūj* [Sūra 85, "The Mansions of the Stars"] there are two Names:

Yā Mubdiʼ	O Initiator!
Yā Muʻīd	O Restorer!

In *Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Sūra 112, "Say: 'He is Allāh, the One!'"][221] there are two Names:

Yā Aḥad	O One!
Yā Ṣamad	O Eternal One!

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[220] As the title of Sūra 59, and where it occurs in the second verse that Sūra, *al-Ḥashr* is sometimes interpreted as meaning "Exile" or "Banishment."

[221] Sūra 112, which is identified here by its opening verse *[āya]*, is most often entitled *al-Ikhlāṣ* ["Sincerity"] or *at-Tawḥīd* ["The Affirmation of Divine Unity"].

Such is the list provided by Sufyān ibn ʿUyaina, but ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] has mentioned several other Names in addition to these, to wit:

Yā Qāhir	O Irresistible One![222]
Yā Fāṣil	O Decisive One!
Yā Fāliq	O Cleaver of the Daybreak!
Yā Raqīb	O Ever-Watchful One![223]
Yā Mājid	O Noble One!
Yā Jawād	O Munificent One!
Yā Aḥkam al-ḥākimīn	O Most Just of all judges!

In a book entitled *Tafsīr al-Asmā' wa'ṣ-Ṣifāt* [Commentary on the Divine Names and Attributes] Abū Bakr an-Naqqāsh attributes the following saying to Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad, meaning [Imām Jaʿfar] aṣ-Ṣādiq[224] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "Allāh has no fewer than three hundred and sixty Names."

It has also been reported, on the authority of another traditional source, that the number of His Names is actually one hundred and fourteen.

All of these larger calculations were presumably arrived at by people who found certain Names repeated many times over in the Qur'ān, and who then counted each occurrence as a separate Name. The correct version is [the total of ninety-nine,] as mentioned in the tradition handed down from Abū Huraira (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him).

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[222] The Name *Yā Qāhir* [O Irresistible One!] does in fact occur in the list attributed to Sufyān ibn ʿUyaina. (See p. 199 above, where it is mentioned as one of the five in *al-Anʿām* [Sūra 6, "Cattle"].)

[223] The Name *Yā Raqīb* [O Ever-Watchful One!] actually occurs twice in Sufyān's list. (See pp. 193 and 194 above, where it is mentioned as one of the six Names in *Sūrat an-Nisā'* [Sūra 4, "Women"] and as one of the seven in *Hūd* [Sūra 11, "Hūd."])

[224] Jaʿfar ibn Muhammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, known as "the Veracious" [*as-Ṣādiq*], was the sixth of the twelve descendants of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who, according to the majority of the Shīʿa, are considered the rightful *Imāms*. He was celebrated for his expert knowledge of Tradition, and came to be regarded as a master of the esoteric sciences.

Come to prayer!	*ḥayya ʿala'ṣ-ṣalāh.*
Come to salvation!	*ḥayya ʿala'l-falāḥ.*
The prayer is about to begin!	*qad qāmati'ṣ-ṣalāh:*
The prayer is about to begin!	*qad qāmati'ṣ-ṣalāh.*
Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar:*
Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*
There is no god but Allāh!	*lā ilāha illa'llāh.*

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As a word in the classical Arabic language, *īmān* [to have faith (in something); to believe (in something)] means *taṣdīq al-qalb* [conscious acceptance (of something) as true], implying knowledge [*ʿilm*] of that which is accepted as true [*muṣaddaq bih*].

In terms of the sacred law [*sharʿ*], it means *at-taṣdīq* [total acceptance and active confirmation of the truth (of the religion)]. That is to say, it means the acknowledgment of Allāh and His attributes [*ṣifāt*], together with the performance of all the prescribed acts of worshipful obedience [*ṭāʿāt*], both those that are obligatory duties [*wājibāt*] and those that are supererogatory [*nawāfil*], as well as the careful avoidance of sinful errors and acts of disobedience.

It can properly be said that faith [*īmān*] is [the observance of the duties of] the religion [*dīn*], [the practice of] the sacred law [*sharīʿa*], and [adherence to] the [Islamic] community [*milla*]. This statement is appropriate because the religion [*dīn*] is what is owed [to Allāh] as a debt [*mā yudānu bih*], to be repaid through the performance of all the prescribed acts of obedience [*ṭāʿāt*], together with the careful avoidance of all those things that are forbidden [*maḥẓūrāt*] and unlawful [*muḥarramāt*]. Such is the character of faith [*īmān*].

As for Islamic commitment [*islām*], it is part of the totality of faith [*īmān*]. Every act of faith is an Islamic commitment [*kullu īmānin islāmun*], but it is not the case that every Islamic commitment is an act of faith [*laisa kullu islāmin īmānan*], because what the word *islām* actually signifies is submission [*istislām*] and obedience [*inqiyād*]. Every true believer [*muʾmin*] is submissive [*mustaslim*] and obedient [*munqād*] to Allāh (Exalted is He), but it is not the case that everyone who has made the Islamic commitment is a true believer in Allāh [*laisa kulli muslimin muʾminan bi'llāh*],[229] because a person may become a Muslim [*yuslimu*] from fear of the sword!

Īmān [*faith*] is a term that encompasses many elements of meaning [*musammayāt*], including both actions [*afʿāl*] and verbal utterances [*aqwāl*]. It therefore applies generally to all forms of worshipful obedience [*ṭāʿāt*], whereas Islām [the Islamic commitment] is an expression that applies only to the two declarations of belief [*shahādatān*],[230] provided that these are made with a clear conscience [*maʿa ṭumaʾnīnati'l-qalb*], or to the five fundamentals of religious worship [*al-ʿibādāt al-khams*].[231]

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[229] In other words: "It is not the case that every Muslim is a true believer in Allāh."

peace) and said: 'I wish to fight in the holy war *[jihād]*.' In answer to the question, 'Are your parents still living?' the man said, 'Yes,' so the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: 'Well then, theirs is the cause for which you must engage in combat!'"

The nature of filial piety *[birr]* is such that it requires all of the following:

1. That you provide in sufficient measure whatever your parents may need.
2. That you keep them out of harm's way.
3. That you treat them with gentle familiarity, as you would treat a little child.
4. That you do not get irritated with them, or with their needs.
5. That you regard service to them as a substitute *[badal]* for many of your supererogatory acts of worship *[nawāfil]*, such as the extra ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* and fasting *[ṣiyām]* you would otherwise be free to perform.
6. That you seek forgiveness [from Allāh] on their behalf, immediately after your ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*.
7. That you make it unnecessary for them to engage in weary toil, or to bear their troubles without support.
8. That you do not raise your own voice above their voices.
9. That you do not go against their wishes in anything, as long as this does not entail any violation of the sacred law *[kharq ash-shar']*.

What is meant by this last point is that obedience to parents cannot go so far as to include the abandonment of obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]*, such as the testimony of Islām *[ḥujjat al-islām]*, the five ritual prayers *[aṣ-ṣalāwāt al-khams]*, payment of the alms-due *[zakāt]*, an act of atonement *[kaffāra]* or the fulfillment of a solemn vow *[nadhr]*. It cannot be stretched to include the committing of any unlawful act *[irtikāb muḥarram]*, in violation of such rules as those that prohibit sexual misconduct *[zinā]*, the drinking of wine *[shurb al-khamr]*, murder *[qatl]*, slanderous accusation *[qadhf]*,[75] and the misappropriation of goods, examples of which are forcible seizure *[ghaṣb]* and theft *[sariqa]*.

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[75] In Islamic law, the term *qadhf* usually refers specifically to an accusation of adultery *[zinā]*, directed against a virtuous man or woman by a person who is unable to produce four reputable witnesses. The penalty incurred by making such an accusation is eighty lashes.

"'"Once again the man said: "You have spoken the truth!" Then he said: "Now tell me all about active goodness *[iḥsān]*." To this Allāh's Messenger replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> [Active goodness means] that you must worship Allāh as if you could see Him, for, even if you do not see Him, he does see you.

"'"Now tell me about the [Final] Hour *[as-Sā'a]*," said the man, so Allāh's Messenger replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "On this subject, the person questioned is no more knowledgeable than the one who is asking the question!"

"'"Then tell me about the portents of it," said the man, so Allāh's Messenger replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> [The portents are] that the maidservant *[ama]* will quarrel fiercely with her mistress *[rabba]*, and that you will see the folk who have nothing to put on their feet, the folk who have no clothes to wear, the folk who are needy, the folk who look after the sheep and the goats, all adopting an attitude of overbearing arrogance.

"'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) continued: 'I tarried there for a little while, then Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said to me: "Do you know who was asking all those questions?" I said: "Allāh and His Messenger know better than I." Then he told me (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "Well, it was Gabriel. He came here to instruct you all in your religion *[dīn]*."'"[232]

Notice how Gabriel (peace be upon him) drew a distinction between Islām and faith *[īmān]* by asking two separate questions, so that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded with two different answers.

Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) also cited the tradition *[ḥadīth]* about the occasion when the Arab tribesman said: "O Messenger of Allāh, you gave something to so-and-so, but you would not give anything to me!" The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded by saying: "That other person is a believer *[mu'min]*." Then the tribesman protested: "But I am a believer *[mu'min]* too!" So the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said to him: "Or are you just a Muslim?"

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[232] **Author's note:** Another version reads: "That was Gabriel. He came here to instruct you all in your religion. He has never appeared to me in any form in which I could not recognize him at once, except in the form he assumed on this visit."

The Imām (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) also cited the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> The Arabs of the desert say: "We believe [*āmannā*]." Say [to them, O Muhammad]: "You do not believe [*lam tuʾminū*], but rather say: 'We surrender [*aslamnā*],' for the faith [*īmān*] has not yet entered into your hearts." (49:14)[233]

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[233] The Arabic word *īmān* is the noun corresponding to the verb *āmana* (from which the forms *āmannā* and *tuʾminū* are derived), and the word *islām* is the noun corresponding to the verb *aslama* (from which the form *aslamnā* is derived). In order to emphasize the connections, the translation of this Qurʾānic verse could therefore be paraphrased to read:

> The Arabs of the desert say: "We have acquired faith." Say [to them, O Muhammad]: "You have not acquired faith; you should rather say: 'We have made the commitment to Islām,' since faith has not yet entered into your hearts."

On what is required before the increase of faith *[ziyādatu'l-īmān]* can come about.

You must also be fully aware that the increase of faith *[ziyādatu'l-īmān]* can only come about as a result of earnest dedication to the performance of the [Divine] commandments *[awāmir]* and the observance of the [Divine] prohibitions *[nawāhī]*, with an attitude of submission *[taslīm]* in respect of destiny *[qadar]*, the abandonment of all protest against Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) in respect of His way of working *[fiʿl]* on His entire creation, the forsaking of all doubt in respect of His promise *[waʿd]* concerning the allotted portions *[aqsām]* of worldly goods and sustenance, the forsaking of all hesitation in respect of confidence *[thiqa]* and absolute trust *[tawakkul]* in Him, the giving up of all reliance on one's own power and strength *[al-ḥawl wa'l-quwwa]*, the patient endurance of misfortune *[aṣ-ṣabr ʿala'l-balā']* and gratitude for good fortune *[ash-shukr ʿala'n-naʿmā']*, the recognition that the Lord of Truth is far beyond comparison with any of His creatures *[tanzīh al-Ḥaqq]*, and the abandonment of finding fault *[tuhma]* with Him under all circumstances whatsoever.

As for whether [the increase of faith can come about] merely through performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* and fasting *[ṣiyām]*, no, [that alone is not enough].

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On the question: "Is faith *[īmān]* a product of creation, or is it uncreated?"

On the subject of faith *[īmān]*, somebody once asked Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "Is it a product of creation *[makhlūq]*, or is it uncreated?"

To this he replied: "If anyone maintains that faith *[īmān]* is a product of creation, that person is guilty of unbelief *[kafara]*, because this implies an attitude of ambiguity and prevarication in relation to the Qur'ān itself. As for someone who maintains that it is uncreated, he is guilty of heretical innovation *[ibtada'a]*, because this implies the deluded notion that actions like that of removing a nuisance from the road, or those involved in the performance of the basic religious duties *[arkān]*, are not products of creation."

Thus the Imām has expressed his disapproval of both parties.

It is mentioned in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Faith *[īmān]* consists of seventy-odd virtues, the most meritorious of which is the affirmation: "There is no god but Allāh *[lā ilāha illa'llāh]*," and the least important of which is the act of removing a nuisance from the road.

When the Imām laid the charge of unbelief against the one professing the doctrine of the created nature *[khalq]* of the Qur'ān, while he accused the other of heretical innovation *[badda'a'l-ākhar]*, he did so for the simple reason that his own doctrine *[madhhab]* (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is based on the following premise: If the Qur'ān says nothing about a particular subject, and if nothing about it has been handed down on the authority of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in the Sunna, then, since the whole generation of the Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them) has passed away, without even one of them having transmitted any statement [relevant to the issue], to make dogmatic pronouncements concerning that particular subject is to be guilty of heresy *[bid'a]* and innovation *[ḥadath]*.

On the impermissibility of making the statement: "I am a believer, as a matter of fact *[ana mu'min—ḥaqqan]*."

It is not permissible for the believer to say: "I am a believer, as a matter of fact *[ana mu'min—ḥaqqan]*." Instead, what he ought to say is: "I am a believer, if Allāh so wills *[in shā'a'llāh]*."

This is contrary to the doctrine of the Mu'tazila,[234] who maintain that it is quite permissible for the believer to say: "I am a believer, as a matter of fact *[ana mu'min—ḥaqqan]*." Our own statement on the subject is based on the traditional report according to which 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "If someone claims that he is a believer *[mu'min]*, he is actually an unbeliever *[kāfir]*."

It is also reported, on the authority of al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that a man once said, in the presence of 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "I am a believer *[innī mu'min]*." When somebody told Ibn Mas'ūd: "This person claims that he is a believer," he said: "In that case, ask him whether he is in the Garden [of Paradise] or in the Fire [of Hell]." They put this question to the man, and he replied: "Allāh knows best! *[Allāhu A'lam]*." 'Abdu'llāh then said to him: "Then are you not just as likely to be assigned to the latter, as you are to be assigned to the former?"[235]

Besides, the only person who is a believer "as a matter of fact *[ḥaqqan]*" is he who is a believer in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He), and he is the one who will be included among the inhabitants of the Garden [of Paradise]. But he will not experience this until after he has died in faith *[ba'da wafātihi fi'l-īmān]*, and when this has been decreed for him as his ultimate destination. No one can know in advance what his ultimate destination will be, so he must always be fearful *[khā'if]*, hopeful *[rājī]*, ready to make amends *[muṣliḥ]*, cautious *[ḥadhir]* and vigilant *[murtaqib]*, in order to ensure that death, when it comes to him, will find him engaged in some good deed. People die in the condition in which they have spent their lives, and they will be gathered at the Resurrection in the state in which they died. As we know from the tradition *[ḥadīth]* that has been handed down to us, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

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[234] See note [174] on p. 178 above.

[235] In other words: "Since you do not know what your ultimate destination will be, should you not qualify your claim to be a believer, by adding: 'if Allah so wills *[in shā'a'llāh]*'?"

> As you live your lives, so shall you die; and as you die, so shall you be resurrected.[236]

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[236] *ka-mā ta'ishūna tamūtūn—wa ka-mā tamūtūna tub'athūn.*

On the doctrine that the actions of human beings are created by Allāh and acquired by His servants.

We are firmly convinced that the actions of human beings *[af'āl al-'ibād]* are the creation *[khalq]* of Allāh, and subject to acquisition *[kasb]* on their part.[237]

This is true of all such actions, regardless of whether they are good or bad, beautiful or ugly. It applies equally to an act of worshipful obedience and to an act of sinful disobedience, not in the sense that He commands the perpetration of an act of sinful disobedience, but in the sense that He has foreordained it *[qaḍā bihā]* and predestined it *[qaddarahā]*, and has caused it to be in accordance with His purpose *[bi-ḥasabi qaṣdih]*.

We are also firmly convinced that He has allotted *[qasama]* and predetermined *[qaddara]* the portions of worldly goods available as means of sustenance. There is no one, therefore, who can interfere with their distribution, and no one who can prevent them [from reaching those of His servants for whom they are intended]. There is no way of reducing what is excessive in them, nor of increasing what is deficient in them. There can be no question of turning what is smooth and easy in them into something rough and difficult, nor of turning what is rough and difficult in them into something smooth and easy.

The livelihood *[rizq]* allotted for tomorrow may not be consumed today, and the portion belonging to Zaid may not be transferred to the ownership of 'Amr.[238]

Moreover, we are firmly convinced that Allāh (Exalted is He) makes unlawful food *[ḥarām]* available, just as He provides food that is lawful

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[237] In other words, human beings have been endowed by their Creator with a faculty by which they acquire responsibility for their actions (although these actions are originally created by Him), and so become entitled to reward or deserving of punishment.

[238] In Arabic legal contexts, Zaid and 'Amr, both common names of men, are often used to designate two persons, such as the plaintiff and the defendant, when their actual names are unknown. (Cf. the John Doe and Richard Roe of American usage.)

[ḥalāl], but only in the sense that He allows it to serve as a form of nourishment for the body and sustenance for the physical constitution, not in the sense that He has actually permitted *[abāḥa]* the consumption of unlawful food.

We are likewise firmly convinced that the murderer does not cut short the span of life that has been predestined *[muqaddar]* for his victim. In actual fact, the latter dies because he has reached his appointed term *[ajal]*. The same is true in the case of a person who is drowned, in that of someone who is crushed by a collapsing wall, in that of someone who is thrown down from a lofty height, and in that of someone who is eaten by a beast of prey.

The same principle applies to the rightly guided conduct *[hidāya]* of the Muslims and the believers *[mu'minīn]*, and to the misguided behavior *[ḍalāla]* of those who disbelieve *[kāfirīn]* in Him (Almighty and Glorious is He). All of this is His doing and His work. He has no partner in His dominion *[lā sharīka lahu fī mulkih]*, and all that we can validly ascribe to His servants is a faculty of acquisition *[kasb]*, which comes into play at the point where the [Divine] commandment *[amr]*, prohibition *[nahy]*, and message *[khiṭāb]* are addressed to them. From then on, the entitlement to reward or punishment depends on them, as He has promised and guaranteed. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> [No soul knows what comfort is laid up for them secretly] as a reward for what they used to do. (32:17)
>
> [Peace be unto you] because you persevered. (13:24)
>
> "What has brought you to this blazing inferno?" They will answer: "We were not of those who prayed, nor did we feed the destitute." (74:42–44)
>
> This is the Fire which you were in the habit of denying! (52:14)
>
> That is for what your two hands have sent on ahead. (22:10)

From these Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]*, as well as others that could be cited, it is clear that Allāh (Glory be to Him) has made the recompense dependent on their actions, thereby establishing that they do have a faculty of acquisition *[kasb]*. This is contrary to the doctrine of the Jahmiyya,[239] who maintain that human beings possess no such faculty of acquisition, and that they are like a door that is pushed open and shut, or a tree that is moved and shaken [by the wind]. These [Jahmiyya] are ultimate destination. No one can know in advance what his ultimate destination will be, so he must always be fearful *[khā'if]*, hopeful *[rājī]*, ready to make amends *[muṣliḥ]*, cautious *[ḥadhir]* and vigilant *[murtaqib]*, in order to ensure that death, when it comes to him, will find him engaged in some good deed. People die in the condition in which they have spent their lives, and they will be gathered at the Resurrection in the state in which they died. As we know from the tradition *[ḥadīth]* that has been handed down to us, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

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[239] See note [185] on p. 183 above.

> As you live your lives, so shall you die; and as you die, so shall you be resurrected.[236]

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[236] *ka-mā ta'ishūna tamūtūn—wa ka-mā tamūtūna tub'athūn.*

Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> [Had your Lord so willed, He would have made mankind one nation] but they continue in their differences *[mukhtalifīna]*, except for those on whom your Lord has mercy; and to that end He did create them. (11:118,119)

In other words, He created them to have differences.

He has also said (Exalted is He):

> Or have they assigned to Allāh partners who created as He created, so that creation is all alike to them? Say: "Allāh is the Creator of all things, and He is the One, the All-Compelling." (13:16)[243]

> Is there any creator, apart from Allāh, who provides for you from the heaven and earth? (35:3)

And then He has said (Exalted is He), on the subject of those who attribute partners to Him *[mushrikūn]*:

> If a good thing happens to them, they say: "This is from Allāh," but if an evil thing befalls them, they say: "This is of your doing." Say: "Everything is from Allāh." How is it with these people? They scarcely understand any tiding.

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Ḥudhaifa (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Allāh (Exalted is He) has created every craftsman and his craftsmanship. He has even created the butcher and the camel for him to slaughter![244]

We also know, from a report transmitted on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Allāh has said: "I have created both good and evil, so blissful is the lot of anyone whom I have destined to be the instrument of good, and alas for anyone whom I have destined to be the instrument of evil!"[245]

Somebody once asked Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) about those actions of human beings through which they may either earn approval from Allāh, or merit His displeasure: "Is this something that originates from Allāh, or something that originates from His servants?" He responded to this by saying: "They belong to Allāh in terms of creation *[khalqan]*, and they arise from His servants in terms of action *[ʿamalan]*."

[243] *am jaʿalū li'llāhi shurakāʾa khalaqū ka-khalqihi fa-tashābaha'l-khalqu ʿalaihim—quli'llāhu Khāliqu kulli shaiʾin wa Huwa'l-Wāhidu'l-Qahhār.*

[244] *inna'llāha taʿālā khalaqa kulla sāniʿin wa sanʿatah—hattā khalaqa'l-jazzāra wa jazūrah.*

[245] *inna'llāha qāl: Ana khalaqtu'l-khaira wa'sh-sharr—fa-tūbā li-man qaddartu ʿalā yadaihi'l-khair—wa wailun li-man qaddartu ʿalā yadaihi'sh-sharr.*

On the doctrine that a believer may not be charged with unbelief because he has committed many sins.

We are also firmly convinced that the believer *[mu'min]*, even if he has committed many sins, both major *[kabā'ir]* and minor *[ṣaghā'ir]*,[246] may not be charged with unbelief *[kufr]* on that account. Even if he departs from this world without repentance, [we still may not call him an unbeliever,] as long as he dies in a state of loyalty to the affirmation of Divine Unity *[tawḥīd]*. His case must be referred to the judgment of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). If He wills, He may pardon him and cause him to enter the Garden [of Paradise], and if He wills, He may punish him and cause him to enter the Fire [of Hell].

It is not for us, therefore, to intrude between Allāh (Exalted is He) and His creature, since Allāh has not informed us of the ultimate destination of that creature.

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[246] Minor sins *[saghā'ir, plural of saghīra]* are those relatively trivial offences, readily pardonable as long as they are not committed persistently, that are inherent in the imperfection of human nature.

As for the major sins *[kabā'ir, plural of kabīra]*, there is some disagreement among the Islamic theologians as to their exact number, but the following list of seventeen is widely accepted:

1. Unbelief or religious infidelity *[kufr]*.
2. The constant commission of minor sins.
3. Despairing of the mercy of Allāh.
4. Considering oneself safe from the wrath of Allāh.
5. Bearing false witness *[shahādat az-zūr]*.
6. Falsely accusing a Muslim of unlawful sexual intercourse *[qadhf]*.
7. Taking a false oath *[ḥinth]*.
8. The practice of magic or sorcery *[siḥr]*.
9. Drinking wine *[khamr]*.
10. Misappropriation of the property of orphans.
11. Taking unjustified profit *[ribā]*.
12. Unlawful sexual intercourse *[zinā]*.
13. Unnatural crime.
14. Theft.
15. Murder.
16. Desertion from the field of battle in the face of an army of unbelievers.
17. Disobedience toward parents.

On the doctrine that, provided he retains his faith *[īmān]*, one whom Allāh condemns to the Fire because of a major sin will not stay there forever.

We are firmly convinced that if Allāh causes someone to enter the Fire [of Hell] because he has committed a major sin *[kabīra]*, provided that person has retained his faith *[īmān]*, he will not be condemned to stay in it forever.

Allāh will eventually release him from it, because the Fire, in his case, is comparable to a prison in this world. He must serve the term of confinement appropriate to the seriousness of his major sin and offense, but then he will be released by the mercy *[raḥma]* of Allāh (Exalted is He) and he will not have to stay there forever. The Fire will not scorch his face, nor will the limbs of those who prostrate themselves in worship be burned by it, because this has been forbidden to the Fire.

His expectation of mercy from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will not cease under any circumstance, no matter how long he remains in the Fire, until He eventually releases him from it. Then he will enter the Garden [of Paradise], and he will be awarded the spiritual degrees corresponding to the extent of his worshipful obedience *[ṭā'a]* during the time he spent in this world.

This is contrary to the doctrine of the Qadariyya, who maintain that acts of worshipful obedience are rendered null and void by major sin, so that there can be no reward for them. The same erroneous doctrine is maintained by the Khawārij.[247] May they be doomed to perdition!

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[247] The Khawārij are noted for their extreme moral strictness, stemming from their absolute rejection of the doctrine of justification by faith without works. They refuse the title of believer *[mu'min]* to anyone who has committed a major sin *[kabīra]*, and treat him as an apostate *[murtadd]*. Some of them go so far as to declare such a person completely beyond redemption, and insist that he should be put to death for his apostasy, along with his wives and children.

On the importance of believing in destiny *[qadar]*, whether it be good or bad.

To qualify as a believer, a person must believe in both the good side of destiny *[qadar]* and its bad side, in both the sweetness of fate *[qaḍā']* and its bitterness.

He must believe that whatever has fallen to his lot, it could not have passed him by, regardless of any precaution he might have taken, and that whatever material goods *[asbāb]* have passed him by, they could not have come his way, regardless of any effort he might have made to obtain them.

He must believe that everything that has ever happened in former eras and ages, and whatever will happen in the future, until the Day of Resurrection *[yaum al-ba'th wa'n-nushūr]*, is in accordance with the decree *[qaḍā']* of Allāh and His foreordained destiny *[qadar maqdūr]*.

He must believe that there no escape for any creature from that foreordained destiny, which has been engraved on the Inscribed Tablet *[al-lawḥ al-masṭūr]*.

He must believe that even if his fellow creatures were to make great efforts to provide a man with benefits not decreed for him by Allāh (Exalted is He), they could not succeed in their endeavor, and that however hard they might try to make him suffer injuries not decreed for him by Allāh (Exalted is He), they would not be able to achieve their aim.

A report to this effect has come down to us in the tradition *[khabar]* of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), and Allāh Himself (Exalted is He) has said:

> If Allāh afflicts you with some injury, there is no one who can remove it but He; and if He desires any good for you, there is no one who can drive away His bounty. He causes it to fall upon whomsoever He will among His servants. (10:107)

According to a report transmitted on the authority of Zaid ibn Wahb, it was 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once told me—and he tells nothing but the truth [*huwa'ṣ-ṣādiq al-maṣdūq*]:

> 'When one of you is created, he is held together in his mother's womb for forty days[248] in the form of a sperm [*nuṭfa*]. Then he becomes a clot of blood [*'alaqa*] by the same process. He then becomes an embryo [*muḍgha*] by the same process.
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> Then Allāh sends an angel with four words, stating his character [*khulq*], his livelihood [*rizq*], his work [*'amal*], and whether he is unfortunate or fortunate. It may happen that a man will do the work of the people of the Fire [of Hell], until the distance that separates him from it is no greater than a span, but then the prerecorded script [*kitāb*] will overtake him, so he will do the work of the people of the Garden [of Paradise], and thus he will enter therein.
>
> It may also happen that a man will do the work of the people of the Garden [of Paradise], until the distance that separates him from it is no greater than a span, but then the prerecorded script [*kitāb*] will overtake him, so he will do the work of the people of the Fire [of Hell], and thus he will enter therein.'"

According to a report transmitted on the authority of 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> It may happen that a man will do the work of the people of the Garden [of Paradise], and yet it is prerecorded in the script [of destiny] that he is one of the people of the Fire [of Hell]. If this be the case, he will undergo a transformation when the time of his death is at hand. He will start doing the work of the people of the Fire, and thus he will enter the Fire.
>
> It may also happen that a man will do the work of the people of the Fire [of Hell], and yet it is prerecorded in the script [of destiny] that he is one of the people of the Garden [of Paradise]. If this be the case, he will change before his death. He will start doing the work of the people of the Garden, and thus he will enter the Garden.

We learn from a report transmitted on the authority of 'Abd ar-Raḥmān as-Sulamī, that 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "On a certain occasion, we were in the presence of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) while he was scratching marks on the ground. Then he suddenly raised his head and spoke to us, saying: 'There is no one at all of whom it is not foreordained, either that his ultimate situation is in the Fire [of Hell], or that his ultimate situation is in the Garden [of Paradise].' All who were present then asked: 'Does that mean there is nothing we can do but trust?'

[248] **Author's note:** In one version of this tradition, the wording is "for forty nights."

"He replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> 'You must work, since everyone receives help [from Allāh] in order to accomplish the purpose for which he was created *[fa-kullun muyassarun limā khuliqa lah]*.'"

It has been reported that Sālim ibn 'Abdi'llāh was told by his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "O Messenger of Allāh, how do you view the work in which we are engaged? Is it something that has already been settled [by Divine preordination], or is it something in which there is scope for innovation and originality?"[249]

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied: "It has already been settled." 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) then asked: "Does that mean there is nothing we can do but trust?" To this he replied (blessing and peace be upon him):

> You must work, O Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, since everyone receives help [from Allāh] in order to accomplish the purpose for which he was created. If a person is one of the people of good fortune *[ahl as-sa'āda]*, he must therefore work for the sake of prosperity, and if a person is one of the people of misfortune *[ahl ash-shaqāwa]*, he must work on account of adversity.

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[249] *a-shai'un qad furigha minh—au shai'un mubtada'un au mubtada'.*

On the belief that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) saw his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) with his ordinary eyes on the night of his Heavenly Journey *[lailat al-Isrā᾿]*.

We believe that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) saw his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) with his ordinary eyes[250] on the night of his Heavenly Journey *[lailat al-Isrā᾿]*, not with his heart *[fu᾿ād]*,[251] and not in a dream.

Traditional authority for this belief is to be found in the report of Jābir ibn ʿAbdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him), according to whose account Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said, in explanation of His words (Exalted is He): "And indeed, he saw Him yet another time *[wa la-qad ra᾿āhu nazlatan ukhrā]*" (53:13):

> I saw my Lord (Glorified be His Name) at close quarters *[mushāfahatan]*; there can be no doubt about it.

He also said, in explanation of His words (Exalted is He): "By the Lote-Tree of the farthest boundary *[ʿinda Sidrati'l-muntahā]*" (53:15):

> I saw Him by the Lote-Tree of the farthest boundary, so that the light of His countenance was clearly visible to me.

Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said, in explanation of His words (Exalted is He):

> And We granted the vision *[ru᾿yā]* that We showed you only as a temptation for mankind. (17:60)

"This refers to a direct eye-vision *[ru᾿yā ʿain]*, which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was shown on the night when he was taken on his Heavenly Journey *[isrā᾿]*."

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[250] Literally, 'with the eyes of his head' *[bi-ʿainai ra᾿sih]*.

[251] An allusion to Qur᾿ān 53:11: "The heart *[fu᾿ād]* in no way falsified what he saw." As ʿA. Yūsuf ʿAlī points out, in footnote 5091 to his translation of the Qur᾿ān: "'Heart' in Arabic includes the faculty of intelligence as well as the faculty of feeling."

Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) also said: "The intimate friendship [of his Lord] is the special gift of Abraham *[al-khulla li-Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him), conversation [with his Lord] is the special gift of Moses *[al-kalām li-Mūsā]* (peace be upon him), and the direct vision [of his Lord] is the special gift of Muḥammad *[ar-ru'yā li-Muḥammad]* (Allāh bless him and give him peace)."

According to yet another saying attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father): "Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) saw his Lord with his own eyes on two occasions."

This is not cancelled out by the contradictory report handed down on the authority of ʿĀ'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), because the latter is a negative statement *[nafy]*, whereas this statement [by Ibn ʿAbbās] is a positive affirmation *[ithbāt]* and, as such, it must take precedence when found in conjunction [with its negative counterpart], especially since the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has himself attested to the reality of his vision.

Abū Bakr ibn Sulaimān has said: "Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) saw his Lord eleven times. Nine of these eleven visions are recorded in the Sunna [traditional accounts of the life of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)] as having occurred on the night of the Heavenly Ascension *[lailat al-Miʿrāj]*, when he was going to and fro between Moses (peace be upon him) and his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), beseeching Him to lighten the burden of ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* imposed upon his Community *[Umma]*, until that burden was reduced by forty-five prayers, in nine stages. The other two occasions are mentioned in the Book [the Qur'ān]."

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On the belief that the deceased must undergo interrogation in the tomb by the pair of angels known as Munkar and Nakīr.

We believe that the pair of angels known as Munkar and Nakīr are sent down to visit every deceased person, with the exception of the Prophets *[nabiyyūn]*. They interrogate the deceased person and put him through an examination on the subject of his religious convictions *[adyān]*.

When they come to visit the grave or tomb for this purpose, the spirit *[rūḥ]* is dispatched to reenter the corpse of the person concerned, who then sits up. Thus, while he is being interrogated, his spirit is also interrogated without suffering any pain.

We also believe that the deceased person can recognize those who come to his graveside to pay him a visit. According to well-established tradition, the most appropriate time for making such a visit is on a Friday, after the glimmer of early dawn and before the actual rising of the sun.

It is necessary to believe in the torment of the tomb *[ʿadhāb al-qabr]* and the severe affliction *[ḍughṭa]* to be experienced therein by people who commit sinful acts of disobedience *[maʿāṣī]*, and by those who are guilty of unbelief *[kufr]*, and it is equally necessary to believe in the blissful comfort *[naʿīm]* to be experienced in it by people who have devoted their lives to worshipful obedience *[aṭ-ṭāʿa]* and faith *[īmān]*.

This is contrary to the doctrine of the Muʿtazila, since they refuse to accept any of this, just as they deny the reality of the interrogation by Munkar and Nakīr. As evidence to prove the correctness of the orthodox teaching on this subject, those who follow in the footsteps of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) *[ahl as-Sunna]* can cite the words of Allāh Himself (Exalted is He):

> Allāh confirms those who believe, with the Word that stands firm, in the life of this world and in the hereafter. (14:27)

As explained in the traditional commentary *[tafsīr]*, "in the life of this world" [in this particular verse of the Qur'ān] means "at the moment when the spirit *[rūh]* leaves the body," while "in the hereafter" means "at the time of the interrogation by Munkar and Nakīr."

They can also cite the report handed down from Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), according to whom Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When one of you, or any human being for that matter, has been buried in the grave, two black-and-blue angels will come to visit him. One of the pair is called an-Nakīr, while the other is known as al-Munkar. They will ask him: "What do you have to say about this man?" (Meaning Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allāh.) Then he will say whatever he has to say.
>
> If he is a believer, his answer to their question will of course be: "[Muhammad is] the servant of Allāh and His Messenger *['abdu'llāhi wa Rasūluh]*. I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh *[ashhadu an lā ilāha illa'llāh]*, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh *[wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan Rasūlu'llāh]*." Then they will say to him: "As a matter of fact, we were already aware that you would say something just like that."
>
> Then a space will be cleared for him inside his tomb, to the extent of seventy cubits by seventy cubits, and light will be provided for him inside his tomb. Then he will be told: "Go to sleep!" He will say: "Allow me to go back to my family, so that I can tell them about this," but he will be told: "Take a rest like the sleep of the bridegroom, who is not aroused from his slumber except by the most dearly beloved member of his family." [So there he will rest] until Allāh eventually resurrects him from that couch of his.
>
> If he is a hypocrite *[munāfiq]*, however, his answer will be: "I really have no idea. I used to hear people saying something or other, and I used to repeat it myself." The two angels will then say: "As a matter of fact, we were already aware that you would say something just like that." Then the earth will be told to close in on him, and it will close in so tight that his ribs will be squeezed in all directions by the pressure of it. He will continue to suffer this torment until Allāh finally resurrects him from that couch of his.

They are also fond of citing the report of 'Aṭā' ibn Yasār (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), according to whom Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to 'Umar ibn al-Khāṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> O 'Umar, how will it be with you, when a hole in the earth is made ready for you, three cubits and a span [in length] by one cubit and a span in width? Then the members of your family will bend over you, as they wash you, as they wrap you in your shroud, and as they anoint you with funeral perfumes *[hannatūka]*.[252] Then they will carry you off and deposit you in that hole in the ground. Then they will pile the dust of the earth on top of you.

> Then they will go away and leave you, and you will be visited by the two interrogators of the tomb, Munkar and Nakīr. The voices of this pair will boom like crashing thunder, their eyes will flash like dazzling lightning, and the strands of their hair will trail down long and low. They will give you a violent shaking and fill you with terror. [So I wonder how will you respond when] they ask: "Who is your Lord, and what is your religion *[man Rabbuka wa mā dīnuka]*?"

ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) replied to this by saying: "O Prophet of Allāh, will this heart of mine *[qalbī]* be with me then, as it is with me today?" When he heard the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) give the answer "Yes," he said: "In that case, I shall give them a satisfactory answer."

Here we have a convincing piece of evidence and an authoritative statement *[naṣṣ]* to prove that this interrogation must take place after the restoration of the spirit *[rūḥ]*, because ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said: "Will this heart of mine be with me?" and the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said "Yes."

The following account has been handed down to us from Minhāl ibn ʿAmr and al-Barāʾ ibn ʿĀzib (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), who said: "We went out together with Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to accompany the funeral procession *[janāza]* of a man from among the Anṣār.[253] When we eventually reached the burial site, and while the corpse was being interred, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) sat down, and we sat down in a circle around him. It was as if birds had alighted on our heads, [so still did we sit] in awe of him. In his hand he held a stick, with which he was scratching marks on the ground. Then he raised his head and spoke, saying: 'I seek refuge with Allāh from the torment of the tomb *[astaʿīdhu bi'llāhi min ʿadhābi'l-qabr]*.' He repeated these words two or three times, then he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> 'When the believing servant *[al-ʿabd al-muʾmin]* is in the process of moving forward into the hereafter, and of parting company with this lower world, he is surrounded by angels whose faces are as bright as the face of the sun. They carry with them a shroud from among the shrouds of the Garden [of Paradise], and funeral perfume *[hunūṭ]* that is likewise from the Garden [of Paradise]. They settle down all around him, as far as the eye can see.

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[252] The Arabic verb *hannata* means 'to prepare a dead person for burial, by the application of *hanūt* [either to his corpse or to his grave-clothes].' The term *hanūt* covers a variety of odiferous substances, including musk, ambergris, camphor and sandalwood.

[253] The *Anṣār* ["the Helpers"] were the citizens of Medina who had embraced Islām, and who welcomed and supported the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and the *Muhājirūn* ["the Emigrés"] at the time of the *Hijra* from Mecca to Medina.

Then the Angel of Death *[Malak al-Maut]* arrives on the scene. He sits by the dead man's head and says: "O soul at peace *[ayyatuha'n-nafsu'l-muṭma'inna]*,[254] O happy soul, go forth to meet forgiveness from Allāh and His good pleasure *[riḍwān]*." Then the soul flows forth, as a drop of liquid flows forth from a vessel, and they gather it up, without letting it fall into the hand of the Angel of Death for the twinkling of an eye before they collect it, in order to place it in that shroud and that perfume.

Then from it there issues an aroma more fragrant than any scent of musk that exists on the face of the earth, and so they carry it up on high. Whenever they pass by an assembled company of angels, they hear them say: "What is this fragrant scent?" So they tell them: "This is So-and-so, the son of So-and-so," calling him by his finest names.

Then they bring the soul in due course to the heaven of this world. They call upon the heaven to open, and it opens up for them. Then they proceed to escort the soul from each heaven to the next heaven above, until they finally reach the seventh heaven, at which point Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) says: "Inscribe his record in *ʿIlliyyīn* [the Uppermost Heaven],[255] and take him back to the earth!"

Thereof We created you, and thereunto We return you, and thence We bring you forth a second time. (20:55)

The spirit *[rūḥ]* is thus returned to the dead man's body. Two angels will now come to visit him. They will ask him: "Who is your Lord, and what is your religion?" He will say: "My Lord is Allāh, and my religion is Islām," so they will go on to ask him: "What do you have to say about this man who has been sent amongst you?"

To this he will reply: "He is Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and he has come to us with the Truth *[Ḥaqq]*."

Their next question will be: "What has made you aware of that?" So he will say: "I have read the Qur'ān, the Book of Allāh (Exalted is He), and I have believed in Him and I have acknowledged the truth of His word."

Then a Voice will cry out from the heaven: "My servant has spoken the truth *[ṣadaqa ʿabdī]*, so furnish a room for him in the Garden [of Paradise], provide him with clothing from the Garden, and open up for him an entrance into the Garden!" Then the scent and the fragance of it will reach him, and the space within his tomb will be expanded as far as his eye can see.

A man with a handsome face and a fragrant scent will come to him and say: "I bring good news that will delight you. This is your day, which you have been promised." He will ask: "Who are you?" and when his visitor replies: "I am your own righteous work," he will exclaim: "My Lord, let the Final Hour begin! *[Rabbi aqimi's-Sāʿa]*.'"

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[254] A partial quotation of Qur'ān 89:27.

[255] An allusion to Qur'ān 83:18–21, which reads: "The register of the righteous is in *ʿIlliyyīn*. Ah, what will convey to you what *ʿIlliyyīn* is? A written record, attested to by those who are brought near [unto their Lord]."

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then went on to say:

> 'As for the unbelieving servant *[al-'abd al-kāfir]*, when he is in the process of moving forward into the hereafter, and of parting company with this world, Allāh sends angels with swarthy faces down to visit him, and they come bearing sacks made of coarse haircloth *[musūḥ]*. They settle down all around him, as far as the eye can see.
>
> Then the Angel of Death *[Malak al-Mawt]* arrives on the scene. He sits by the dead man's head and says: "O wicked soul, go forth to meet the displeasure of Allāh and His wrath."
>
> Then all the limbs and organs of his body are split apart, and they are pulled away from him as easily as the crochet hook is pulled away from damp wool. All the veins and nerves are cut out of him, and the angels gather them up and stuff them into those haircloth sacks.
>
> There issues from them an odor more evil-smelling than the stench of any putrid cadaver, and so they carry that soul up aloft. Whenever they pass by an assembled company of angels, they hear them say: "What is this nasty odor?" So they tell them: "This is So-and-so, the son of So-and-so," calling him by his ugliest names.
>
> Then they bring the soul in due course to the heaven of this world. They call upon the heaven to open, but it will not open up for them.'

"At this point, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) recited the following verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān:

> 'For them the gates of heaven will not be opened. (7:40)'

"Then he went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> 'So Allāh (Glory be to Him) will say: "Inscribe his record in *Sijjīn*,"[256] and then his spirit *[rūḥ]* will be driven away.'

"At this point, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) recited:

> 'For if anyone ascribes partners to Allāh, it is as if he had fallen from the sky and the birds had snatched him or the wind had blown him to a far-off place. (22:31)'

"'In other words,' he explained:

> 'The spirit *[rūḥ]* of that person will be sent back and made to reenter his dead body. Two angels will now come to visit him. They will sit beside him and ask: "Who is your Lord?"

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[256] An allusion to Qur'ān 83:7–9, which reads: "No indeed: the register of the wicked is in *Sijjīn*. Ah, what will convey to you what *Sijjīn* is? A written record." (According to some of the traditional commentaries, the location of *Sijjīn* is a certain valley in Hell, or a certain rock beneath the seventh earth, where Iblīs and his forces have their abode.)

> He will respond to this by saying: "Ha ha! I have no idea!" Then they will ask him: "What is your religion?" Again his reply will be: "Ha ha! I have no idea!" So they will go on to ask him: "What do you have to say about this man who has been sent amongst you?" Once again his reply will be: "Ha ha! I have no idea!"
>
> Then the Voice will cry out: "My servant has told only lies, so furnish a space for him in the Fire [of Hell], provide him with clothing from the Fire [of Hell], and open up for him a entrance into the Fire [of Hell]!" Then he will catch a whiff of its heat and its poisonous fumes, and the space within his tomb will become so cramped that his ribs will be squeezed in all directions.
>
> A badly dressed man with an ugly face and a stinking odor will come to him and say: "I bring you bad news that will distress you. This is your day, which you have been promised." He will ask: "Who are you?" and when his visitor replies: "I am your own evil work," he will exclaim: "My Lord, do not let the Final Hour begin!"""

ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and his father) is reported as having said: "When the believer *[muʾmin]* is laid to rest in his grave, the space inside it will be expanded for the sake of his comfort, so that it comes to be seventy cubits in width and seventy cubits in length. The leaves of sweet-smelling plants *[rayāḥīn]* will be strewn upon him, and he will be draped in silk from the Garden [of Paradise]. If he has with him any portion of the Qurʾān, it will provide him with all the light he could ever need. Even if he does not have with him any portion of the Qurʾān, a light like the light of the sun will be installed for his benefit inside his grave.

"His condition will then be comparable to that of the bride, who sleeps and is not roused from her slumber by anyone other than the most dearly beloved member of her family, and who seems, when she does arise from her sleep, as if she would have been quite happy to go on sleeping even longer.

"When the unbeliever *[kāfir]* is laid in his grave, on the other hand, it will become more and more cramped for him, until his ribs are squeezed into his belly. Serpents resembling camels of the hairy, long-necked, two-humped Bactrian species *[bukht]* will be dispatched to deal with him, and they will devour his flesh so thoroughly that not a trace of flesh will be left on his bones. Devils *[shayāṭīn]* who are deaf, dumb and blind will also be dispatched to deal with him.[257] They will come bearing sledge-hammers *[faṭāṭīs]* made of iron, and they will feel no pity for him as they beat him with these, since they can neither hear his cries nor see [the effects of their hammer-blows]. He will also be exposed to

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[257] ***Author's note:*** According to some accounts, it will be the accursed Satan *[ash-Shaiṭān ar-rajīm]* himself.

On various forms of vocal expression *[fi'l-aṣwāt]*.

As for the recitation *[inshād]*[71] of poems *[ash'ār]* without the accompaniment of musical instruments *[malāhī]*, it falls into two categories, namely that which is permissible *[mubāḥ]* and that which is forbidden *[maḥẓūr]*. The permissible type is that which contains no trivial nonsense *[sukhf]*, while the forbidden type is that which does contain trivial nonsense.

Where this kind of performance is accompanied by musical instruments, however, it comes into the forbidden category in either case, regardless of whether it is quite devoid of triviality or does have some trivial content. The only difference is that, where trivial content is a factor, the prohibition applies for two reasons.

It is considered reprehensible to perform the recitation *[qirā'a]* of the Qur'ān with modulations of the voice *[alḥān]*, in the style of a minstrel singing songs for entertainment *[aghānī muṭriba]*. The recitation of the Qur'ān must be approached with reverence and a meticulous regard for the integrity of the sacred text. This modulated style is therefore inappropriate, because it is all too likely to result in a departure from the correct pronunciation established by tradition *[ikhrāj al-kalām 'an sunanih]*.[72]

Besides, the fruit of the Qur'ān is the fear of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), the sense of caution inspired by listening to its stern exhortations *[mawā'iẓ]*, the instructive lessons taught by its demonstrated proofs *[barāhīn]*, its stories *[qiṣaṣ]* and its parables *[amthāl]*, and the arousal of yearning for its promise *[wa'd]*—and all of this may be lost if it is made to sound too sweet.

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[71] The style of recitation called *inshād* is virtually a form of chanting.

[72] ***Author's note*** : [Typical mistakes would include] the omission of a prolonged vowel sound *[isqāt al-tāla]* and the substitution of a glottal stop *[hamz]*, the prolongation of a sound that should be pronounced short *[maqsūr]*, the shortening of a sound that should be drawn out *[mamdūd]*, and the assimilation of consonants which ought to be pronounced separately *[idghām al-hurūf]*.

beneath the Heavenly Throne *['Arsh]*. Then, when the second blast of the trumpet is sounded, they will come back to join their physical bodies on the earth, to face the review and the reckoning on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*. We know all this from the traditional report that has been handed down to us on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), according to whom Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When your [believing] brothers have been slain by someone [on the side of the unbelievers], Allāh will lodge their spirits inside the crops of certain green birds, which are free to roam about in the Garden of Paradise, and they will betake themselves for refuge to lamps of gold in the shade of the Heavenly Throne.
>
> Then, when they discover the delightful quality of their food, their drink and their resting place, they will say: "Who will let our brothers know that we are actually alive, enjoying sustenance in the Garden of Paradise, so they will not abstain from the [sacred] struggle *[jihād]*, so they will not flinch from the [holy] war *[ḥarb]*!"
>
> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will then tell them, for He is the Most Truthful of tellers *[Aṣdaqu'l-qā'ilīn]*: "I shall let them know!"

Allāh has in fact sent down this very message, in His words (Exalted is He):

> Think not of those who are slain in the way of Allāh as dead. Nay, they are living. With their Lord they have provision. Jubilant are they because of that which Allāh has bestowed upon them of His bounty. (3:169,170)

It must therefore be quite possible for the interrogation and the punishment, or the blissful comfort, to be experienced by one part of the physical body of the believer *[mu'min]* or the unbeliever *[kāfir]*, even if the other parts are missing, and for what is done to the part to be done to the whole.

As somebody once put it: "Allāh may gather those dismembered parts together for the purpose of subjecting them to pressure and interrogation *[li'ḍ-ḍughṭati wa'l-mas'ala]*, just as He will do this when the time comes for the Resurrection and the Reckoning *[li'l-ḥashri wa'l-muḥāsaba]*."

◆

On the necessity of believing in the raising of the dead and their resurrection from the graves or tombs.

It is also necessary to believe in the raising *[baʿth]* of the dead and their resurrection *[nashr]* from the graves or tombs. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> And because the Hour will come, there is no doubt about it; and because Allāh will raise up those who are in the tombs. (22:7)

It must be exactly as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> As He brought you into being, so do you return [unto Him]. (7:29)
>
> Out of the earth We created you, and into it We shall send you back again, and We shall bring bring you forth from it a second time. (20:55)

Allāh (Glorious and Exalted is He) will resurrect them, and He will assemble them all together, in order to recompense every soul *[nafs]* for what it has achieved; in order to punish those who have acted badly for their evil deeds, and in order to reward those who have done well for their deeds of goodness. As He Himself has said (Glorious is His Majesty):

> Allāh is He who created you, then He provided for you, then He shall cause you to die, then He shall give life to you again. (30:40)

Since He was capable of creating them in the first place, He must surely be capable of bringing them back to life, even if this is denied by the Muʿaṭṭila[258] (may they be doomed to perdition!)

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[258] The Muʿaṭṭila are those who profess the doctrine known as *taʿṭīl*, which means the denial of the very existence of the attributes *[ṣifāt]* of Allāh (Exalted is He). This doctrine was adopted as an extreme reaction to the anthropomorphic interpretation known as *tashbīh*.

On the belief that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) saw his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) with his ordinary eyes on the night of his Heavenly Journey *[lailat al-Isrā']*.

We believe that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) saw his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) with his ordinary eyes[250] on the night of his Heavenly Journey *[lailat al-Isrā']*, not with his heart *[fu'ād]*,[251] and not in a dream.

Traditional authority for this belief is to be found in the report of Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him), according to whose account Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said, in explanation of His words (Exalted is He): "And indeed, he saw Him yet another time *[wa la-qad ra'āhu nazlatan ukhrā]*" (53:13):

> I saw my Lord (Glorified be His Name) at close quarters *[mushāfahatan]*; there can be no doubt about it.

He also said, in explanation of His words (Exalted is He): "By the Lote-Tree of the farthest boundary *['inda Sidrati'l-muntahā]*" (53:15):

> I saw Him by the Lote-Tree of the farthest boundary, so that the light of His countenance was clearly visible to me.

Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said, in explanation of His words (Exalted is He):

> And We granted the vision *[ru'yā]* that We showed you only as a temptation for mankind. (17:60)

"This refers to a direct eye-vision *[ru'yā 'ain]*, which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was shown on the night when he was taken on his Heavenly Journey *[isrā']*."

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[250] Literally, 'with the eyes of his head' *[bi-'ainai ra'sih]*.

[251] An allusion to Qur'ān 53:11: "The heart *[fu'ād]* in no way falsified what he saw." As 'A. Yūsuf 'Alī points out, in footnote 5091 to his translation of the Qur'ān: "'Heart' in Arabic includes the faculty of intelligence as well as the faculty of feeling."

On maintaining a state of purity *[ṭuhūr]* at all times.

It is considered commendable to maintain a constant state of ritual purity *[ṭuhūr]*, for in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> Maintain a constant state of ritual purity throughout your life, and pray *[ṣalli]* by night and by day as often as you can, for then the recording angels *[ḥafaẓa]* will love you.
>
> Perform the prayer in the heat of the forenoon *[ṣalāt ad-ḍuḥā]*, for it is the prayer of those who frequently repent *[al-awwābīn]*.[59]
>
> Offer the salutation *[sallim]* to the people of your household when you enter your house, for this will increase the welfare of your home.
>
> Treat the elders among the Muslims with solemn reverence, and treat the juniors among them with compassion, for then you will have me as your companion in the Garden [of Paradise].

This *ḥadīth* groups together a whole set of good practices.

◆

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[59] The forenoon prayer *[ṣalāt ad-ḍuḥā]* is not one of the five obligatory daily prayers. According to one authority cited by E.W. Lane in his *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. ʾ–W–B, the time for its [optional] performance is "when the young camels feel the heat of the sun from the parched ground."

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Anas al-Anṣārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> I shall intercede, on the Day of Resurrection, on behalf of more people than there are stones and lumps of clay upon the face of the earth.

He will have the right to intercede, at the Resurrection, both next to the Balance *[Mīzān]* and beside the Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]*, and every other Prophet will likewise have his own right of intercession. According to a traditional report handed down on the authority of Ḥudhaifa (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Abraham (peace be upon him) will say, on the Day of Resurrection: "O Lord! *[yā Rabbāh]*," so Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will say to him: "Doubly at your service! *[yā Labbaikāh]*." He will then say: "O Lord, You have burned the children of Adam!" To this He will respond (Glorious and Exalted is He) by giving the command: "Release from the Fire of Hell anyone whose heart contains as much faith *[īmān]* as the weight of a grain of wheat or barley!"

The champions of truth *[ṣiddīqīn]* and the righteous members *[ṣāliḥūn]* of every Community *[umma]* will likewise be granted a right of intercession.

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Every Prophet *[nabī]* is entitled to receive a special gift, and I have kept my own special gift stored away, to be used as a means of intercession *[shafā'a]* on behalf of my Community. A man who is a member of my Community may intercede on behalf of his whole tribe *[qabīla]*, and Allāh (Exalted is He) will allow them all to enter the Garden of Paradise on account of his intercession.
>
> One man may intercede on behalf of a whole company *[fi'ām]* of people, and Allāh will allow them all to enter the Garden of Paradise on account of his intercession. One man may intercede on behalf of three individuals. One man may intercede on behalf of two. One man may intercede on behalf of one man.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has also said, according to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> There are some people among the Muslims who will be made to suffer punishment in the Fire of Hell, but who will then be allowed to enter the Garden of Paradise, because of the mercy of Allāh (Exalted is He) and the intercession of those who intercede.

but his own hypocrisy *[nifāq]*, the enthusiastic support of people addicted to sinful disobedience, the willing cooperation of the devils among men and jinn in defiance of Allāh (Exalted is He), the abandonment of obedient service to Him, and the commission of unlawful deeds.

3. His manner of commanding and forbidding must be one that is characterized by lenient flexibility and sympathetic understanding, not by boorish impoliteness and harsh insensitivity. To put it even more emphatically, he should approach the task with an attitude of friendliness and good will. He should have a feeling of genuine concern for his brother, considering the fact that he has cooperated with his own enemy, the accursed Satan, who has seized control of his mind, and who has made it seem attractive to him to disobey his Lord and reject His commandment, with the intention of causing him to perish and be consigned to the Fire [of Hell]. As Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> [The devil] summons his party only that they may be among the inhabitants of the blazing inferno.[140] (35:6)

Allāh (Exalted is He) also said to His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> It was by the mercy of Allāh that you were lenient with them, for if you had been harsh and hard of heart, they would have scattered from all around you. (3:159)

Moreover, Allāh (Exalted is He) said to Moses and Aaron *[Hārūn]* (peace be upon them both), when He sent them to Pharaoh:

> And speak to him gently, for then he may be mindful, or perhaps feel afraid. (20:44)

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said, according to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Usāma:

> It is not appropriate for anyone to enjoin what is right and fair and to forbid what is wrong and unfair, until he possesses three good qualities: [He must be] well versed *[ʿālim]* in what he is enjoining, well versed in what he is forbidding; gentle *[rafīq]* in the process of enjoining, gentle in the process of forbidding; tolerant *[ḥalīm]* in his approach to enjoining, tolerant in his approach to forbidding.[141]

4. He must be patient *[ṣabūr]*, tolerant *[ḥalīm]*, long-suffering *[ḥamūl]*, humble *[mutawāḍiʿ]*, dispassionate *[zāʾil al-hawā]*, stout-hearted *[qawī al-qalb]*, and disposed to be lenient *[layyin al-jānib]*. He must be a physician *[ṭabīb]* capable of healing the sick, a doctor *[ḥakīm]* with the skill to treat

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[140] *innamā yadʿū ḥizbahu li-yakūnū min aṣḥābi's-saʿīr.*

[141] In the printed text of the Damascus edition of *al-Ghunya*, the third of the three good qualities mentioned in this frequently quoted tradition has somehow been omitted from the list.

On the necessity of believing in the Narrow Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]* over Hell.

It is also necessary to believe in the Narrow Bridge over Hell. This is a bridge that spans the central range of the surface of Hell. It leads whomever Allāh wills into the Fire, allows whomever He wills to pass safely across, and sends down into Hell whomever He wills. In each case, they have as much light to see by as their deeds deserve, so they move across in various ways, some walking, some running, some riding, some creeping and some crawling.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has described it as "equipped with flesh-hooks." The tradition in which this reference occurs is too long to quote in its entirety, so let us take it from the point where he says (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> [The Narrow Bridge over Hell is] equipped with flesh-hooks like the thorns of the prickly plant known as the *saʻdān*. Are you all familiar with the thorns of the *saʻdān?*

His listeners said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allāh," so he continued:

> They are just like the thorns of the *saʻdān*, except that none but Allāh (Exalted is He) knows the size of their spikes. Anyway, they snatch at people, some of whom are doomed to perish because of their evil deeds, and some of whom are rendered epileptic *[mukhardal]*.[264]

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Choose your sacrificial animals *[dahāyā]* with the utmost care, for they will be your means of transport across the Narrow Bridge.

According to traditional reports, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) gave this description of the Narrow Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]*:

> It is narrower than a hair, hotter than a live coal, and sharper than a sword. Its length is the distance of a journey lasting three hundred years, as years are reckoned in the hereafter.[265] The righteous can pass safely over it, but the wicked will slip and fall off it.

[264] ***Author's note***: An epileptic is someone who is liable to fall down and throw a crazy fit. Some people are smitten with epilepsy but then recover from it. This can also be said of the colic *[qut']*.

[265] ***Author's note***: According another version, this should read: "three thousand years, as years are reckoned in the hereafter."

On the orthodox Islamic doctrine concerning the Basin *[Ḥawḍ]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), from which the believers will quench their thirst at the Resurrection.

Those who remain faithful to the orthodox tradition of Islām *[ahl as-Sunna]* are firmly convinced that, when the Resurrection comes, our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) will have at his disposal a Basin *[Ḥawḍ]* from which he will supply water to quench the thirst of the believers, but not of the unbelievers, and that this drinking from the Basin will occur after their crossing of the Narrow Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]*, and prior to their entry into the Garden of Paradise.

Anyone who drinks a draught from the Basin will never feel thirsty again. The width of it is equal to the distance traveled in a month. Its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. Around it there are as many jugs as there are stars in the sky. Inside it there are two spouts, through which the water is channeled from the River of Abundance *[Kawthar]*, the source of which is in the Garden of Paradise, while its offshoot is at the Place of Standing.[266]

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Thawbān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), it was mentioned by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) when he said:

> I shall be there beside my Basin on the Day of Resurrection.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asked about the capacity of the Basin, so he said:

> [It is as wide as] the distance between this spot, where I am standing now, and 'Umān [in the southeast corner of Arabia]. The drink it contains, which is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey, is channeled into it from the Garden of Paradise through two spouts, one of them made of silver and the other of gold. Anyone who drinks a draught from it will never feel thirsty again.

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[266] The site at 'Arafa where Pilgrims perform the rite of 'standing' *[wuqūf]*.

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the Prophet also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Your point of rendezvous is my Basin. The width of it is equal to its length, and that is greater than the distance between Īliyā' and Mecca, which is the distance traveled in a month. In it there are jugs, as many as the stars. Its water is whiter than silver. Anyone who approaches it and drinks from it will never feel thirsty again.
>
> Each of the Prophets *[anbiyā']* will likewise have a Basin *[ḥawḍ]* at his disposal, with the exception of the Prophet Ṣāliḥ.[267] Instead of a Basin, he will have the udder of his she-camel, from which the believers of every religious Community *[umma]* may drink, but not the unbelievers.

According to yet another tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> My Basin is a wide as the distance between Aden *[ʿAdan]* and Oman *[ʿUmān]*. It is flanked by pavilions made of pearls that have been hollowed out, and its jugs are as numerous as the stars in the sky. Its porcelain consists of the most fragrant musk, and its water is whiter than milk, cooler than snow, and sweeter than honey. Anyone who drinks a draught of it will never feel thirsty again.
>
> When the Day of Resurrection comes, some men will be chased away from me, just as the stray she-camel is chased away from the herd of camels, so I shall say: "Why don't you come here? Why don't you come here?" Then I shall hear people telling me: "You have no idea what mischief they got up to after your lifetime!" So I shall ask: "What mischief did they get up to?" Then people will say: "They introduced heretical changes and alterations." So I shall say: "A curse be upon them, in that case, and let them be damned!"

This belief in the Basin is rejected by the Muʿtazila,[268] so they will not be allowed to drink from it. They will be sent away thirsty and made to enter the Fire of Hell, unless they repent their false doctrine, their denial of the Truth *[Ḥaqq]*, and their rejection of the relevant Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]* and traditional reports *[akhbār wa āthār]*.

In a report transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) the following saying is attributed to the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Anyone who denies the reality of the intercession *[shafāʿa]* will have no share in it, and anyone who denies the reality of the Basin *[ḥawḍ]* will have no share in it.

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[267] One of the Prophets of Arabia (peace be upon them).

[268] See note [174] on p. 178 above.

On the orthodox Islamic doctrine that, on the Day of Resurrection, Allāh will cause His Messenger and Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to sit upon the Heavenly Throne.

Those who remain faithful to the orthodox tradition of Islām *[ahl as-Sunna]* are firmly convinced that, on the Day of Resurrection, Allāh will cause His Messenger *[Rasūl]* and His Chosen Prophet *[Nabī Mukhtār]* to sit above all the rest of His Prophets and His Messengers, together with Him upon the Throne.

This belief is based on a report transmitted on the authority of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), according to whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once gave an explanation of His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> It may be [O Muhammad] that your Lord will raise you up to a praiseworthy station *[maqāman maḥmūdā]*. (17:79)

He said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> [This means that] He will cause him to sit together with Himself upon the Throne.[269]

From a report transmitted on the authority of Hishām ibn ʿUrwa, we learn that ʿĀ'isha (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with her) once asked Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) what was meant by the 'praiseworthy station,' and he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> My Lord has promised to let me sit upon the Heavenly Throne.[270]

A similar report has come down to us from ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

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[269] *yujlisuhu maʿahu ʿala's-sarīr.*

[270] *waʿadanī Rabbī'l-quʿūda ʿala'l-ʿarsh.*

ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Salām (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "When the Day of Resurrection has arrived, your Prophet will be brought forth, and he will then be seated in the presence of Allāh, upon His Footstool *[Kursī]*." Some people said to him: "O Abū Masʿūd, if he is going to be on the Footstool of the Lord of Truth, does that mean he will not be together with Him?" So he replied: "Woe unto you! To me, this is the most delightful story in the world."

In giving his account of the same subject, al-Ḥajjāj said: "When the Day of Resurrection has arrived, the All-Compelling One *[Jabbār]* will set Himself down upon His Throne, with His feet upon His Footstool. Then your Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) will be brought forth, and he will be seated in His presence, upon His Footstool." They said to al-Ḥumaidī, "If he is going to be on the Footstool, will he really be together with Him?" So he replied: "Yes, woe unto you, he will indeed be together with Him!"

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On the orthodox Islamic doctrine that, on the Day of Resurrection, Allāh (Exalted is He) will call His believing servant to account.

Those who remain faithful to the orthodox tradition of Islām *[ahl as-Sunna]* are also firmly convinced that, on the Day of Resurrection, Allāh (Exalted is He) will call His believing servant to account, that He will draw him close to Himself, and that He will cast His protective shadow over him, in order to hide him from the sight of human beings.

This belief is based on the traditional report handed down on the authority of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), who stated that he once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> The believer *[mu'min]* will be brought forth on the Day of Resurrection, and Allāh (Exalted is He) will draw him close to Himself. Then He will cast His protective shadow over him, in order to hide him from the sight of human beings. Then He will say, repeating each question twice: "My servant, do you confess to such and such a sin? Do you confess to such and such a sin?"
>
> The servant will continue to reply: "Yes, my Lord," until He has made him acknowledge every one of his sins, at which point he will feel sure that he must be doomed. But then the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He) will say to him: "My servant, although you committed all these sins, I overlooked them while you were still in the world below, and today I shall grant you pardon for them."

What is meant by the 'reckoning' or 'calling to account' *[muḥāsaba]* is the process whereby Allāh makes His servant aware of exactly how much reward his actions have earned him, and exactly how much punishment is due, by reading out the list of his bad deeds or his good deeds, and noting what he has to his credit and what is recorded in his debit column.

The Muʿaṭṭila[271] may try to deny the reality of the reckoning, but Allāh (Exalted is He) has given them the lie, for He has told us:

> Truly, unto Us is their return; then upon Us shall rest the responsibility for their reckoning. (88:25,26)

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[271] See note [177] on p. 179 above.

On the orthodox Islamic doctrine that Allāh (Exalted is He) has a Balance *[Mīzān]*, in which, on the Day of Resurrection, He will weigh the good deeds and the bad deeds of the believers.

Those who remain faithful to the orthodox tradition of Islām *[ahl as-Sunna]* are firmly convinced that Allāh (Exalted is He) has a Balance *[Mīzān]*, equipped with two scales and a tongue, in which, on the Day of Resurrection, He will weigh the good deeds and the bad deeds of the believers.

This belief is rejected by the Mu'tazila,[272] as well as by the Murji'a[273] and the Khawārij,[274] since they maintain that the Balance is meant to be understood allegorically, as a figurative expression for Justice *['adl]*, and that it does not signify the literal weighing of deeds. The refutation of their doctrine can be found in the Book of Allāh and the Sunna of His Messenger. Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> And We shall set up the just scales *[al-mawāzīna'l-qisṭ]* for the Day of Resurrection, so that not one soul shall be wronged in anything at all. Even if it be the weight of one grain of mustard seed, We shall produce it, and sufficient are We for reckoners. (21:47)
>
> Then he whose deeds weigh heavy in the scales shall inherit a pleasing life, but he whose deeds weigh light in the scales, his mother shall be the Pit. Ah, what will convey to you what she is? A blazing fire! (101:6–11)[275]

Justice is not described merely in terms of lightness and heaviness! The Balance must surely be held in the hand of the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]* (Glorious is His Majesty), because He is the One who is in charge of their reckoning. This is confirmed by the traditional account of an-Nawwās ibn Samʿān al-Kullābī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who reported that he once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

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[272] See note [174] on p. 178 above.

[273] There is a lack of unanimity among the scholars with regard to how the Murji'a ["The Postponers"] came to be so called. The most probable explanation is that they acquired the name because of their great emphasis on the doctrine of *irjā'* [postponement], according to which the judgment of sinful believers must be deferred until the Resurrection.

[274] See note [267] on p. 217 above.

[275] *fa-ammā man thaqulat mawāzīnuhu—fa-huwa fī 'īshatin rāḍiya—wa ammā man khaffat mawāzīnuhu—fa-ummuhu Hāwiya—wa mā adrāka mā hiya—nārun ḥāmiya.*

> The Balance *[Mīzān]* will be held in the hand of the All-Merciful (Almighty and Glorious is He). Some people it will raise up high, and others it will bring down low, on the Day of Resurrection.

There are some, however, who maintain that it will be held in the hand of Gabriel (peace be upon him), on the strength of a report transmitted by Ḥudhaifa ibn al-Yamānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who said: "Gabriel (peace be upon him) will be the holder of the Balance, so His Lord will say to him: 'Weigh, O Gabriel, and see how their weights compare!' Then they will be checked, one in comparison to another."

According to the report of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The Balance will be set up on the Day of Resurrection. A man will then be brought forth, to be placed in one scale of the Balance, while all of his deeds that have been counted are also placed in one scale or the other. When this causes the Balance to tilt [in the wrong direction], Allāh will give the order for the man be led off to the Fire.
>
> But at that very moment, just when he has turned to go, a crier will cry out from the presence of the All-Merciful: "Do not be in such a hurry! Do not be in such a hurry, for there is still something left to be counted in his favor!" Something will then be produced, in which the words '*Lā ilāha illa'llāh* [There is no god but Allāh]' can be seen. This will be put in the man's place in the scale of his good deeds, causing the Balance to tilt in his favor, so the order will then be given for him to be led off to the Garden of Paradise.

In yet another tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the following words are attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> On the Day of Resurrection, a man will be brought up to the Balance. Then ninety-nine scrolls *[sijill]* will be produced, each of them stretching as far as the eye can see. All of these scrolls will contain the record of his evil deeds and sinful errors. His evil deeds will thus be seen to outweigh his good deeds, so the order will be given for him to be led off to the Fire of Hell.
>
> But at that very moment, just when he has turned to go, a crier will cry out from the presence of the All-Merciful: "Do not be in such a hurry! Do not be in such a hurry, for there is still something left to be counted in his favor!" Something

> no bigger than the tip of a man's thumb will then be produced. (As he was saying this, the Prophet squeezed half of his own thumb between his fingers.)[276]
>
> It will contain the declaration of faith *[shahāda]*, testifying that there is no god but Allāh, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh *[an lā ilāha illa'llāh wa anna Muhammadan Rasūlu'llāh]*. This will be placed in the scale of his good deeds, causing his good deeds to weigh heavier than his evil deeds, so the order will then be given for him to be led off to the Garden of Paradise.[277]

It has been said that the weights *[ṣanj]* to be used on that Day [of Resurrection] will be those that are now used to measure tiny grains and mustard seeds.

Good deeds will take the form of some beautiful object, which will be cast into the scale of radiant light. The Balance will then record the weight of it as heavy, because of the mercy *[raḥma]* of Allāh. Evil deeds will take the form of some foul object, which will be cast into the scale of darkness. The Balance will then register the weight of it as light, because of the justice *['adl]* of Allāh (Exalted is He).

The Balance will indicate the presence of a heavy weight by the upward motion of the scale, and of a light weight by the downward motion of the scale, contrary to the balances of this world. What causes it to register a heavy weight will be faith *[īmān]* and the utterance of the twofold declaration of belief *[qawl ash-shahādatain]*, and what causes it to register a light weight will be the ascription of partners *[shirk]* to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). If the scale moves upward, the person concerned will be admitted to the Garden of Paradise, because it is up on high. But if it registers a light weight, the person concerned will be made to enter the bottomless pit of the Fire of Hell, because it is in the region of the lowest of the low. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> Then he whose deeds weigh heavy in the scales shall inherit a pleasing life, but he whose deeds weigh light in the scales, his mother shall be the Pit. (101:6–9)

In other words, the former shall dwell in a Garden of Paradise on high, while the latter must have his base, his abode and his destination in a blazing fire, for such is the Pit.

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[276] This sentence represents a parenthetic observation by the narrator of the tradition *[hadīth]*, interjected to give graphic effect to the words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[277] ***Author's note***: In a slightly different version, the wording is: "A scrap of paper *[qirṭās]* no bigger than this—the Prophet squeezed his thumb to demonstrate—will be produced on his behalf. It will contain the declaration of faith *[shahāda]*, testifying that there is no god but Allāh, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh *[an lā ilāha illa'llāh—wa anna Muhammadan Rasūlu'llāh]*. . . ." The rest of the tradition *[hadīth]* is narrated in the same words as the version quoted in the text.

When it comes to the balancing *[muwāzana]* of deeds, human beings fall into three different categories:

1. There are some whose good deeds outweigh their evil deeds, and who will therefore be commanded to enter the Garden of Paradise.

2. There are some whose evil deeds outweigh their good deeds, and who will therefore be commanded to enter the Fire of Hell.

3. There are some cases where neither set of deeds outweighs the other. Such people are known as the Dwellers on the Heights *[Aṣḥāb al-Aʿrāf]*, until such time as Allāh bestows His mercy upon them, whenever He so wills, and finally allows them to enter the Garden of Paradise. It is they who are referred to in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> And on the Heights *[ʿala'l-Aʿrāfi]* there are certain men who know them all by their marks. And they call out to the inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise: "Peace be upon you!" They have not entered it themselves, although they may hope [to do so one day]. (7:46)

There is also the case of the man whose deeds will be weighed as written records, in the form of ninety-nine scrolls, as we have already mentioned. All that we know about this has reached us by way of oral transmission and hearsay.

As for those who enjoy a special intimacy with the Lord *[al-muqarrabūn]*,[278] they will be allowed to enter the Garden of Paradise without any reckoning.

To quote the exact words of the well-known tradition *[ḥadīth]*:

> Seventy thousand will enter the Garden of Paradise without any reckoning, and each one of them will bring seventy thousand along with him.

As for the unbelievers *[kāfirūn]*, they will enter the Fire of Hell without any reckoning.

Among the believers *[muʾminūn]*, there are some who will have to undergo a simple reckoning, and then the order will be given for them to be admitted to the Garden of Paradise, as mentioned above. There are also some who will be subjected to a rigorous examination, and then each case will be left for Allāh to decide. He may give the order for a particular individual to be admitted to the Garden of Paradise, or to the Fire of Hell, as He wills. He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

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[278] Literally, 'those who are drawn close.'

> Then as for him who is given his record in his right hand, he shall surely receive an easy reckoning, and he will return to his family in joy. But as for him who is given his record behind his back, he will surely call for destruction, and he shall be roasted at a scorching blaze. (84:7–12)
>
> And every man's bird of omen We have fastened to his own neck, and We shall bring forth for him, on the Day of Resurrection, a book which he will find wide open. [And it will be said unto him:] "Read your book! Your own soul suffices you this day as a reckoner against you." (17:13,14)

We may also cite the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), according to whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Allāh will surely call every creature to account, except for those who ascribe partners *[ashraka]* to Allāh. If a person is guilty of this, he will not be called to account; he will be ordered to go straight into the Fire of Hell.

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On the orthodox Islamic doctrine that the Garden of Paradise *[al-Janna]* and the Fire of Hell *[an-Nār]* are products of creation.

Those who remain faithful to the orthodox tradition of Islām *[ahl as-Sunna]* are firmly convinced that both the Garden of Paradise *[al-Janna]* and the Fire of Hell *[an-Nār]* are products of creation. They are two abodes *[dārān]* which Allāh (Exalted is He) has made ready, one of them for the blissful comfort and reward to which the people of worshipful obedience and faith *[ahl aṭ-ṭāʿa wa'l-īmān]* are entitled, and the other for the chastisement and exemplary punishment deserved by those who are guilty of sinful disobedience and trangression *[ahl al-maʿāṣī wa'ṭ-ṭaghyān]*.

Since the moment when Allāh (Exalted is He) created them both, they have been everlasting, and they shall never cease to exist. The Garden of Paradise is the place where Adam and Eve (peace be upon them both) once dwelt, as well as the accursed Iblīs, but then they were evicted from it, as the well-known story tells.

The Muʿtazila[279] refuse to accept this doctrine. As for the Garden of Paradise, therefore, they shall not enter it, and as for the Fire of Hell—by my life!—they shall dwell in it forever, condemned for all eternity because of their denial. They surely deserve such a fate, since they themselves consider it to be the proper punishment for a believer *[mu'min]* who is guilty of a single major sin, regardless of his being one who affirms the Divine Unity *[muwaḥḥid]* and who is normally obedient to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

The refutation of their false doctrine can be found in the Book of Allāh and in the Sunna of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> And a Garden as wide as are the heavens and the earth, which has been made ready for those who are devoted to their duty *[muttaqīn]*. (3:133)

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[279] See note [174] on p. 178 above.

> Beware of the Fire which has been made ready for the unbelievers *[kāfirīn]*. (3:131)

If something has been made ready, it must have been brought into existence. Every rational person knows this, so he must acknowledge the fact that the Garden of Paradise and the Fire of Hell are both products of creation.

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> I was admitted to the Garden of Paradise, and—lo and behold!—there I was beside a flowing stream, flanked on both sides by pavilions made of pearls. I dipped my hand in [what looked like] water flowing by, and—lo and behold!—it was musk, of the most exquisitely fragrant kind. I said: "O Gabriel, what is this?" He replied: "This is the River of Abundance *[al-Kawthar]*, which Allāh (Exalted is He) has bestowed upon you."

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), somebody once said to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "O Messenger of Allāh, tell us about the Garden of Paradise. Of what is it constructed?" To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> A brick of gold and a brick of silver. Its pavement is musk of the most exquisitely fragrant kind. Its pebbles are sapphires *[yāqūt]* and pearls *[lu'lu']*, and its soil is turmeric *[wars]* and saffron *[za'farān]*. Those who enter it will stay there forever. They will never die. They will lead a comfortable and carefree life, and they will never feel despair. Their clothes will never turn to rags, and their youth will never become old age.

Here we have evidence to prove that both [the Garden of Paradise and the Fire of Hell] are products of creation, and that the bliss experienced in the Garden of Paradise is a permanent state, which shall never pass away. As Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> Its food is everlasting, and [so is] its shade. (13:35)
>
> Neither out of reach nor yet forbidden. (56:33)

Included among its blessings are the fair maidens with wide, lovely eyes *[al-ḥūr al-'īn]*,[280] whom Allāh has created to abide forever in the Garden of Paradise. They shall not pass away, nor shall they ever die. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> Therein are maidens of modest gaze, whom neither man nor jinn have touched before them. (55:56)

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[280] See note [68] on p. 92 above.

We may also quote His words (Hallowed and Exalted is He):

> Fair ones, close-guarded in pavilions *[ḥūrun maqṣūrātun fi'l-khiyām]*. (55:72)

Umm Salama, the wife of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), related the following conversation:

"I said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, tell me about the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He): "Like unto hidden pearls *[ka-amthāli'l-lu'lu'i'l-maknūn]*.[281]"' To this he replied: 'Their pure beauty *[ṣafā]* is like the pure beauty of pearls inside their oyster shells.' He went on talking, until he eventually said: 'They say: "We are the immortal females *[khālidāt]*, so we shall never die. We are the blissfully happy females *[nāʿimāt]*, so we shall never feel despair. We are the permanently abiding females *[muqīmāt]*, so we shall never move away. We are the well-contented females *[rāḍiyāt]*, so we shall never be dissatisfied." They dwell in an abode of Truth *[Ḥaqq]*, so they tell nothing but the truth.'"

We have it on the authority of Muʿādh ibn Jabal (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a wife makes her husband suffer in this world, what is bound to happen is that his wife among the fair maidens of Paradise, with those wide, lovely eyes *[al-ḥūr al-ʿīn]*, will say to her: "Do not make him suffer—may Allāh curse you!—for he is only a temporary guest in your company, always on the verge of leaving you for us."

Once it has been established beyond doubt that both the Garden of Paradise and the Fire of Hell, and all that they contain, shall never cease to exist, it is clear that Allāh (Exalted is He) will not expel anyone from the Garden of Paradise, that death can have no power over those who dwell therein, and that they shall never cease to experience its joyful bliss. Their bliss will actually increase from day to day, through the endlessness of all eternity. To make their bliss complete, Allāh will give the command for death itself to be slaughtered, on a wall between the Garden of Paradise and the Fire of Hell. The herald will then cry out: "O you who dwell in the Garden of Paradise, now there is only eternal life *[khulūd]*, for death is no more! O you who dwell in the Fire of Hell, now there is only eternal life, for death is no more!"

This is based on the authentic tradition *[khabar ṣaḥīḥ]*, as it has been handed down to us from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

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[281] Qur'ān 56:23.

On the orthodox Islamic doctrine concerning the Basin *[Ḥawḍ]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), from which the believers will quench their thirst at the Resurrection.

Those who remain faithful to the orthodox tradition of Islām *[ahl as-Sunna]* are firmly convinced that, when the Resurrection comes, our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) will have at his disposal a Basin *[Ḥawḍ]* from which he will supply water to quench the thirst of the believers, but not of the unbelievers, and that this drinking from the Basin will occur after their crossing of the Narrow Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]*, and prior to their entry into the Garden of Paradise.

Anyone who drinks a draught from the Basin will never feel thirsty again. The width of it is equal to the distance traveled in a month. Its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. Around it there are as many jugs as there are stars in the sky. Inside it there are two spouts, through which the water is channeled from the River of Abundance *[Kawthar]*, the source of which is in the Garden of Paradise, while its offshoot is at the Place of Standing.[266]

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Thawbān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), it was mentioned by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) when he said:

> I shall be there beside my Basin on the Day of Resurrection.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asked about the capacity of the Basin, so he said:

> [It is as wide as] the distance between this spot, where I am standing now, and 'Umān [in the southeast corner of Arabia]. The drink it contains, which is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey, is channeled into it from the Garden of Paradise through two spouts, one of them made of silver and the other of gold. Anyone who drinks a draught from it will never feel thirsty again.

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[266] The site at 'Arafa where Pilgrims perform the rite of 'standing' *[wuqūf]*.

or prose, rhetoric or eloquence, but has a style that surpasses the eloquence *[faṣāḥa]* of every eloquent speaker *[faṣīḥ]*, and the rhetorical skill *[balāgha]* of every fluent orator *[balīgh]*. The Arabs were incapable of producing anything to compare with it. They could not even match one chapter *[sūra]* from it. Allāh (Exalted is He) did in fact challenge them, saying:

> Then produce ten sūras the like thereof, invented [by yourselves]. (11:13)

When they failed to meet this challenge, He said (Exalted is He):

> Then produce a single sūra the like thereof. (2:23)

But they were incapable even of this, however great their superiority over all their contemporaries in the arts of rhetoric and eloquent speech. They had to admit defeat, since the superior merit of the Qur'ān was overwhelmingly apparent to them.

This is why the Qur'ān has come to be recognized as a miracle *[mu'jiza]* peculiar to the Prophet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), comparable to the miracle of the staff *['aṣā]* in the case of Moses (peace be upon him). Moses was sent during the era in which the sorcerers *[saḥara]* and skilled practitioners of the art of magic were in the ascendant, so the staff of Moses (peace be upon him) swallowed up all the tricks they used to employ in order to bewitch people's eyes and to cast a spell upon them.

> So they were vanquished there, and they turned about, reduced to humiliation. And the sorcerers were cast down, bowing low in prostration. (7:119,120)

It is also comparable to the miracles performed by Jesus (peace be upon him), when he brought the dead back to life, and in his healing of the leper and the man who had been blind from birth *[akmah]*. Jesus (peace be upon him) was sent during a period of history when the most influential people were skilled physicians. They were well aware that certain sicknesses and diseases could not be cured by them, for all their superb skill in the practice of medicine, so they accepted his guidance and believed in him, on account of his superiority over them in their own craft, and his remarkable ability to perfom miracles in their own field of professional expertise.

Thus the eloquence of the Qur'ān and its inimitable character *[i'jāz]* can be regarded as a miracle *[mu'jiza]* peculiar to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), comparable to the miracles of the staff and the restoration of the dead to life, in the respective cases of Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them both).

Other miracles performed by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) include:

1. The gushing forth of water from between his fingers.[284]
2. Feeding a multitude of people with a tiny supply of food.[285]
3. The speaking of the poisoned arm, and its uttering the words: "Do not eat from me, for I have been poisoned!"
4. The splitting of the moon *[inshiqāq al-qamar]*.[286]
5. The plaintive cry of the palm tree stump *[ḥanīn al-jidh']*.[287]
6. The speaking of the camel.
7. The movement of the tree toward him.[288]

Of course, these are but a few of the miracles ascribed to him (Allāh bless him and give him peace), since their total number is said to be as high as one thousand.

There are two good reasons to explain why the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) did not reproduce such earlier miracles as the staff of Moses and his white hand, the revival of the dead and the healing of the leper and the man who had been blind from birth [performed by Jesus], the she-camel of Ṣāliḥ,[289] or the particular miracles assigned to the rest of the Prophets *[anbiyā']*. One of these two reasons is that it was necessary to ensure that his Community *[umma]* would not refuse to accept them as true, and so be doomed to perish as the Communities *[umam]* before them had perished. As Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

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[284] The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is said to have produced this miraculous supply of water to quench the thirst of his Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them all) during the encounter with the unbelievers of Quraish that resulted in the treaty of al-Ḥudaibiyya.

[285] According to some traditional reports, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once fed a thousand people with the meat of one kid and a single measure *[ṣā']* of barley.

[286] According to some traditional authorities, this miracle is referred to in the verses of the Qur'ān (54:1,2) which read: "The hour has drawn nigh, and the moon has split in two. Yet if they see a miraculous sign *[āya]* they turn away, and they say: '[It is nothing more than] a prolonged trick of sorcery *[siḥrun mustamirr]*.'"

At this point in his famous commentary *[tafsīr]* on the Qur'ān, al-Baidāwī says: "Some say that the unbelievers demanded this sign of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and the moon was split in two; but others say it refers to a sign of the coming Resurrection."

[287] This stump is said to have wept to such an extent that it almost split in two, because it was so disappointed when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) refrained from leaning against it.

[288] Tradition tells that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once fell asleep beneath a tree, which then moved with the sun in order to keep him in the shade. According to another traditional report, two trees miraculously moved to provide him with shade.

> Nothing has prevented Us from sending the miraculous signs *[āyāt]*, except that the folk of old cried lies to them. (17:59)

The second reason is that if he had in fact produced miracles similar to those performed by his predecessors, people would have said to him: "You have not come up with anything unheard of. You are merely copying from Moses and Jesus, so you must be one of their followers. We shall not believe in you, until you produce for our benefit something that none of the ancients ever produced." This is why Allāh (Glory be to Him) never conferred upon any of His Prophets the same miracle He had already bestowed upon another, but chose instead to grant each Prophet a special miracle of his own, quite different from that of his predecessor.

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[289] The story of this she-camel is told in the Qur'ān (7:77,78):

> So they hamstrung the she-camel, and they flouted the commandment of their Lord, and they said: 'O Ṣāliḥ! Bring your threats to bear upon us, if you are indeed one of those sent [by Allāh]. So the earthquake caught them unawares, and morning found them lying prostrate in their place of abode.

He sent Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) with the Truth, as a Prophet pure and innocent of all vices.	*ba'atha Muḥammadan* *(ṣalla'llāhu 'alaihi wa* *sallam) bi'l-ḥaqq:* *nabiyyan ṣafiyyan barī'an* *mina'l-'āhāti kullihā.*
And he delivered the message he was sent to deliver, like a brilliant lamp and a radiant light and a shining proof.	*wa ballagha mā* *ursila bih:* *sirājan ẓāhiran* *wa nūran sāṭi'an* *wa burhānan lāmi'ā.*
May Allāh bestow His blessings and grant peace to him and to all the members of his family.	*ṣalla'llāhu 'alaihi* *wa sallama* *wa 'alā ālihi* *ajma'īn.*
Well then, surely these matters are all in Allāh's hand. He causes them to flow in their proper channels, and He makes them follow their right courses.	*thumma inna hādhihi'l-* *umūra kullahā bi-yadi'llāhi* *yuṣarrifuhā* *fī ṭarā'iqihā* *wa yumaḍḍīhā* *fī ḥaqā'iqihā.*
No one can bring forward that which He has postponed, and no one can put back what He has brought to the fore.	*lā muqaddima* *li-mā akhkhara* *wa lā mu'akhkhira* *li-mā qaddama.*
No couple can be joined together except by His judgment and His decree.	*wa lā yajtami'u'thnāni* *illā bi-qaḍā'ihi* *wa qadarih.*
For every judgment there is a decree, and for every decree there is an appointed time, and "for every appointed time there is a written record."[122]	*wa li-kulli qaḍā'in* *qadarun* *wa li-kulli qadarin* *ajalun* *wa li-kulli ajalin* *kitāb.*
"Allāh erases what He will, and He fixes (what He will), and with Him is the Essence of the Book."[123]	*yamḥu'llāhu mā yashā'u* *wa yuthbitu* *wa 'indahu* *ummu'l-kitāb.*
It was in accordance with the judgment of Allāh and His decree, that So-and-So, the son of So-and-So, should offer	*wa kāna min* *qaḍā'i'llāhi* *wa qadarihi* *an yakhṭuba* *Fulānu'bnu Fulān*

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[122] Qur'ān 13:38 (these two lines only, excluding the initial word 'and [*wa*].')

[123] Qur'ān 13:39.

The most excellent of these are the ten for whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) vouched that they would surely enter the Garden of Paradise. They are: Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān, ʿAlī, Ṭalḥa, az-Zubair, ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf, Saʿd [ibn Abī Waqqāṣ], Saʿīd [ibn Zaid], and Abū ʿUbaida ibn al-Jarrāḥ.[293]

The most excellent of these righteous ten are the rightly guided Caliphs *[al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshidūn]*, the four who are the best of all.

The most excellent of these four is Abū Bakr, followed by ʿUmar, then by ʿUthmān, and then by ʿAlī (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with them all).

The Caliphate *[khilāfa]* belonged to these four, following the death of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), for a period of thirty years all told. Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was in command for just over two years, ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) for ten, ʿUthmān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) for twelve, and ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) for six. The office of Caliph was then held by Muʿāwiya for a period of nineteen years, prior to which he had spent twenty years as governor of the people of Syria, in a post to which he had been appointed by ʿUmar.

The Caliphate of the Four Imāms was a matter of free election by the Companions, with their unanimous agreement and willing consent. Its acquisition was also due to the superior merit of each of them, in his own age and time, over and above the rest of the Companions. It was not taken by the sword, by compulsion, coercion and forcible seizure from someone more worthy of the position.

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[293] These ten noble Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them all) are generally referred to as *al-ʿAshara 'l-Mubashshara* ["The ten who received glad tidings."]

On the Caliphate of Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth *[aṣ-Ṣiddīq]* (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

As for the Caliphate of Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth *[aṣ-Ṣiddīq]* (may Allāh be well pleased with him), it came about through the unanimous agreement of the Emigrants *[Muhājirūn]* and the Helpers *[Anṣār]*.[294] The way it happened was as follows: When the earthly life of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had come to an end, the spokesmen of the Helpers said: "[Let there now be] a leader *[amīr]* from amongst ourselves, and a leader from among you [Emigrants]."

Then up stood 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him), saying: "O band of Helpers, surely you are well aware that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) commanded Abū Bakr to lead *[an ya'umma]* the people [in prayer]?" They all said: "Yes, of course!" So he said: "In that case, which of you considers himself fit to stand in front of Abū Bakr?" They all responded to this by saying: "May Allāh protect us from presuming to stand in front of Abū Bakr!"

According to a slightly different account of this same sequence of events, the words spoken by 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him), were: "In that case, which of you considers himself fit to remove him from the position to which he was appointed by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)?" They all responded to this by saying: "None of us considers himself fit to do such a thing! We seek forgiveness from Allāh [for having entertained such a notion]."

Thus they found themselves in complete accord with the Emigrants, and so the full complement of the Companions paid homage to Abū Bakr, including 'Alī and az-Zubair.[295]

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[294] These terms have been explained in note [253] on p. 225 above.

[295] The participation of 'Alī and az-Zubair is emphasized at this point, because these two would later be involved in serious controversy and conflict over the succession to the Caliphate.

This also explains why it is stated, in the authentic traditional report, that when homage was paid to Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) he stood up three times, turning to face the people as he said: "O people, should I release you from your pledge of allegiance *[bai'a]* to me? Is anyone making it reluctantly?"

'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was among the first of the people present to stand up and say in reply: "We shall never depose you, we shall never ask for your resignation! It was Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who brought you to the fore, so who would dare to push you to the rear?" We have in fact been informed, on the authority of very reliable sources, that 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was the most outspoken of all the Companions in favor of the leadership *[imāma]* of Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

We know from traditional reports that 'Abdu'llāh ibn al-Kawwā' entered the presence of 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) after the Battle of the Camel,[296] and asked him: "Did Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) entrust you with any special information concerning this matter [of the Caliphate]?" To this he replied by saying: "We examined our situation carefully, and we had to acknowledge that the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* is the mainstay of Islām. We were therefore content to accept, as appropriate to the conduct of our affairs in this world, that which Allāh and His Messenger had seen fit to approve for the sake of our religion *[dīn]*. So we entrusted the matter [of the Caliphate] to Abū Bakr."

The point that 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is making here is that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), during the days of his final sickness, had delegated the task of leading the prescribed ritual prayer *[imāmat aṣ-ṣalāt al-mafrūḍa]* to Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth *[aṣ-Ṣiddīq]* (may Allāh be well pleased with him). Bilāl[297] would come to him at the time appointed for each of the five daily prayers, and he would utter the Call to Prayer in his presence *[yu'adhdhinuhu bi'ṣ-ṣālat]*. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would then say: "Go and tell Abū Bakr that he must lead the people in prayer."

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[296] The Battle of the Camel was fought in A.H. 36, between 'Alī and his supporters on one side, and an army assembled by Ṭalha and az-Zubair on the other. The battle, in which 'Alī was victorious, acquired its name from the camel ridden by 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), who was in the thick of the fight, on the side of Ṭalha and az-Zubair, until her camel was killed.

[297] Bilāl, an Abyssinian slave who had been ransomed by Abū Bakr, was the first muezzin *[mu'adhdhin]* appointed by the the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to summon the Muslim community to the five daily prayers.

While he was still alive and well, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would often speak on the subject of Abū Bakr, (may Allāh be well pleased with him), in such terms that it became quite obvious to all the Companions that he must be the person best qualified to assume the Caliphate when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was no longer with them. It was made equally obvious, in respect of 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with them), that each of them would be the one best qualified to assume that office in his own age and time.

Among other evidence to this effect, we have the traditional report of Ibn Baṭṭa, complete with its chain of transmission *[isnād]* from 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who said: "Someone asked: 'O Messenger of Allāh, whom shall we appoint to be our leader, when you are no longer with us?' He replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace) by saying:

> If you appoint Abū Bakr to be your leader, you will find him trustworthy, abstemious in relation to this world, and enthusiastic in relation to the hereafter. If you appoint 'Umar to be your leader, you will find him strong and trustworthy, someone who is not afraid, when the interest of Allāh is at stake, of criticism from any critic. If you put 'Alī in charge, you will find him a good guide, who is himself rightly guided.

"Because of this, they agreed unanimously that the Caliphate should go to Abū Bakr."

According to another traditional report, handed down to us on the authority of our own Imām, Abū 'Abdi'llāh Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the validity of the Caliphate of Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has been established beyond any doubt, by clear and explicit evidence as well as by implication.

This also happens to be the doctrine *[madhhab]* of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and a significant group of experts in the tradition *[aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth]*. One piece of evidence to support their view is provided by Abū Huraira (may

Allāh be well pleased with him), according to whose report the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When I was carried aloft on my Heavenly Ascension, I asked my Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) to appoint ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib as Caliph after my lifetime. But the angels said: "O Muhammad, Allāh does whatever He wills. The Caliph after you will be Abū Bakr."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said, according to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

> The one [who will be Caliph] after me is Abū Bakr, but he will not remain here very long after I am gone.

Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said to me: 'The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) did not leave the abode of this lower world until he had informed me: "Abū Bakr will be in charge after I am gone. Then ʿUmar, then ʿUthmān after him, then ʿAlī after him."'"

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On the Caliphate of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

As for the Caliphate of ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him), he was designated to succeed to it by Abū Bakr himself (may Allāh be well pleased with him), so all the Companions willingly agreed to pledge their allegiance to him, and to call him by the title "Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Muʾminīn]*."

According to the statement of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father): "They said to Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him): 'What will you say to your Lord, when you meet Him tomorrow [at the Resurrection], knowing that you designated ʿUmar to succeed you as our Caliph, even though you were fully aware of his coarse severity?' But he replied: 'I shall say: "I designated the best of Your people to succeed me as their Caliph."'"

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On the Caliphate of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

As for the Caliphate of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), it also came about as a result of the unanimous agreement of the Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them all). The actual process was as follows: ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) had excluded his own sons from the succession to the Caliphate, which he left to be decided by a consultative council *[shūrā]* consisting of six individual members, namely Ṭalḥa, az-Zubair, Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, ʿUthmān, ʿAlī, and ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf. ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān said to ʿAlī and ʿUthmān: "I shall vote for one of you two, for the sake of Allāh and His Messenger, and for the sake of all the believers."

Then he took ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) by the hand, and said to him: "O ʿAlī, let it be your responsibility to fulfill the contract *[ʿahd]* and compact *[mīthāq]* of Allāh, His covenant *[dhimma]* and the covenant of His Messenger. I hereby pledge you my allegiance, trusting that you will conduct yourself in all sincerity, for the sake of Allāh, for the sake of His Messenger, and for the benefit of all the believers, and that you will follow in the footsteps of His Messenger, of Abū Bakr, and of ʿUmar." But ʿAlī was afraid that he might not be strong enough to cope with the negative criticism to which he would be exposed, so he declined to accept the offer. ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān then took ʿUthmān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) by the hand, and said to him what he had just said to ʿAlī. ʿUthmān gave him a positive response, so he stroked the hand of ʿUthmān and pledged his allegiance to him. ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) pledged his allegiance to him also. Then the rest of the people all pledged their allegiance.

Thus it was that 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān came to be the Caliph of all the people, by their unanimous agreement. He was a rightful leader *[imām]* until the day he died. He was never guilty of anything serious enough to justify the attempts to impeach him, the accusations of moral depravity, and his eventual assassination, contrary to the claims made by the Rawāfiḍ[298] (may they be doomed to perdition!)

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[298] According to some authorities, the Rawāfid ["Deserters"] are so called because they refused to give their allegiance to Abū Bakr and 'Umar. Others say that the name was first given to a sect of the Shī'a in Kufa, because they deserted their leader, Zaid ibn 'Alī ibn Ḥusain ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, when he refused to accede to their demands that he should express abusive condemnation of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. As used by Sunni Muslims, the term ar-Rawāfid (and its synonym ar-Rāfida) is commonly applied to the Shī'a as a whole.

On the Caliphate of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

As for the Caliphate of ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), it came about as a result of the general agreement of the community, and by the consensus of the Companions.

This view of the matter is borne out by the traditional report of Abū ʿAbdi'llāh ibn Baṭṭa, who attributes the following account to Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya:

"I was in the company of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib while ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān was under siege. Then a man came along and told us: 'The Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Mu'minīn]* was killed just a little while ago.' ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) sprang to his feet at once, so I grabbed him and held him by the waist, for fear that he might do something rash, but he cried: "Let go of me, you motherless wretch!" Then ʿAlī went to the palace, where he found that ʿUthmān had indeed been slain, so he made his way to his own house, went inside, and locked the door.

"The people came after him, and started hammering on his door. As soon as they were admitted inside, they said: 'ʿUthmān has been killed, and the people cannot manage without a Caliph. There is no one, as far as we know, who is better qualified for the job than you are.' But ʿAlī responded to this by saying to them: 'You do not really want me, for I can serve you better as a minister *[wazīr]* than as a commander *[amīr]*.'

"Still the people insisted: 'We know of no one who is better qualified for the job than you are.' So he said (may Allāh be well pleased with him): 'Very well, if you insist on leaving me no choice. In any case, the fact that homage has been paid to me will not be a secret for long, but let me go out to the mosque *[masjid]*, so that all those who wish to pledge their allegiance to me may do so there.' 'He then left his house (may Allāh be well pleased with him) and went to the mosque, where the people came and pledged their allegiance to him."

bless him and give him peace), comparable to the miracles of the staff and the restoration of the dead to life, in the respective cases of Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them both).

Other miracles performed by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) include:

1. The gushing forth of water from between his fingers.[284]
2. Feeding a multitude of people with a tiny supply of food.[285]
3. The speaking of the poisoned arm, and its uttering the words: "Do not eat from me, for I have been poisoned!"
4. The splitting of the moon *[inshiqāq al-qamar]*.[286]
5. The plaintive cry of the palm tree stump *[ḥanīn al-jidh']*.[287]
6. The speaking of the camel.
7. The movement of the tree toward him.[288]

Of course, these are but a few of the miracles ascribed to him (Allāh bless him and give him peace), since their total number is said to be as high as one thousand.

There are two good reasons to explain why the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) did not reproduce such earlier miracles as the staff of Moses and his white hand, the revival of the dead and the healing of the leper and the man who had been blind from birth [performed by Jesus], the she-camel of Ṣāliḥ,[289] or the particular miracles assigned to the rest of the Prophets *[anbiyā']*. One of these two reasons is that it was necessary to ensure that his Community *[umma]* would not daily prayers, and he would utter the Call to Prayer in his presence *[yu'adhdhinuhu bi'ṣ-ṣālat]*. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would then say: "Go and tell Abū Bakr that he must lead the people in prayer."

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[284] The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is said to have produced this miraculous supply of water to quench the thirst of his Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them all) during the encounter with the unbelievers of Quraish that resulted in the treaty of al-Ḥudaibiyya.

[285] According to some traditional reports, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once fed a thousand people with the meat of one kid and a single measure *[ṣā']* of barley.

[286] According to some traditional authorities, this miracle is referred to in the verses of the Qur'ān (54:1,2) which read: "The hour has drawn nigh, and the moon has split in two. Yet if they see a miraculous sign *[āya]* they turn away, and they say: '[It is nothing more than] a prolonged trick of sorcery *[siḥrun mustamirr]*.'"

At this point in his famous commentary *[tafsīr]* on the Qur'ān, al-Baiḍāwī says: "Some say that the unbelievers demanded this sign of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and the moon was split in two; but others say it refers to a sign of the coming Resurrection."

[287] This stump is said to have wept to such an extent that it almost split in two, because it was so disappointed when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) refrained from leaning against it.

[288] Tradition tells that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once fell asleep beneath a tree, which then moved with the sun in order to keep him in the shade. According to another traditional report, two trees miraculously moved to provide him with shade.

While he was still alive and well, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would often speak on the subject of Abū Bakr, (may Allāh be well pleased with him), in such terms that it became quite obvious to all the Companions that he must be the person best qualified to assume the Caliphate when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was no longer with them. It was made equally obvious, in respect of 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with them), that each of them would be the one best qualified to assume that office in his own age and time.

Among other evidence to this effect, we have the traditional report of Ibn Baṭṭa, complete with its chain of transmission *[isnād]* from 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who said: "Someone asked: 'O Messenger of Allāh, whom shall we appoint to be our leader, when you are no longer with us?' He replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace) by saying:

> If you appoint Abū Bakr to be your leader, you will find him trustworthy, abstemious in relation to this world, and enthusiastic in relation to the hereafter. If you appoint 'Umar to be your leader, you will find him strong and trustworthy, someone who is not afraid, when the interest of Allāh is at stake, of criticism from any critic. If you put 'Alī in charge, you will find him a good guide, who is himself rightly guided.

"Because of this, they agreed unanimously that the Caliphate should go to Abū Bakr."

According to another traditional report, handed down to us on the authority of our own Imām, Abū 'Abdi'llāh Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the validity of the Caliphate of Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has been established beyond any doubt, by clear and explicit evidence as well as by implication.

This also happens to be the doctrine *[madhhab]* of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and a significant group of experts in the tradition *[aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth]*. One piece of evidence to support their view is provided by Abū Huraira (may above the thirty, they must belong to the Caliphate of Muʿāwiya, which lasted for nineteen years and a few months all told, because the first period of thirty years was completed by ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), as we have already explained.[302]

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[302] See p. 255 above.

On the special respect due to the wives of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who are regarded as the Mothers of the Believers, and to his daughter Fāṭima (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

We hold a good opinion of all the wives of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). We firmly believe that they are the Mothers of the Believers *[Ummahāt al-Mu'minīn]*, and that 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is one of the most excellent women in the entire universe. Allāh (Exalted is He) has declared her completely innocent of the charges brought against her by the renegades, as we read [in the Qur'ān][303] and as people will go on reading until the Day of Judgment *[Yawm ad-Dīn]*.

It is likewise true of Fāṭima, the daughter of our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace, and may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with her, and with her husband and her children), that she is one of the most excellent women in the entire universe. It is incumbent upon us to regard her with loving care and affection, just as this is incumbent upon us with respect to her father (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

As the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> Fāṭima is a piece of me. I am troubled by anything that troubles her.[304]

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[303] "They who spread the slander are a gang among you...," (23:11) and: "They are liars in the sight of Allāh." (23:13)

[304] *Fāṭimatu biḍ'atun minnī—yurībunī mā yurībuhā.*

no capital letters, and the letters of each word are most often closely linked together, in print as well as in handwriting. The name "Muḥammad" is therefore spelled *mḥmd*, and the whole name in Arabic takes up little more space than the initial "M" of the transliterated form.

- Due to significant differences in word formation, grammar and syntax, the typical Arabic sentence is more concise than its English counterpart. Let me offer just one rather striking example: The single Arabic word *kabbir* (simply *kbr* in writing or print) means: "Proclaim the Supreme Greatness of the One Almighty God." It is true that "Say, '*Allāhu Akbar*'" could qualify as a translation of sorts—despite being two-thirds Arabic—but even this shorter expression is still about five times the length of *kbr*.
- In the Damascus edition of *al-Ghunya*, on which the present translation is almost entirely based, the editor has supplied about a dozen footnotes, all of them quite brief. The contrast here is particularly stark, since the translator has provided hundreds of footnotes, many of them quite lengthy.

Enough said, I trust, to explain why *Sufficient Provision* has been published in several volumes. Attention to the subject matter has resulted in this particular five-volume set, following dividing lines apparent in the structure and contents of the work.

Of the points that remain to be clarified, the most important concerns the editorial treatment of Volume One, where certain subsections have been assigned to the Appendices. As for the material presented in Appendix 1, this consists of selections from the Book of Good Manners *[Kitāb al-Ādāb]*, most of them relating quite specifically to physical situations and cultural conditions that are likely to be remote from the everyday experience of our readers. In the case of Appendix 2, the material was actually classed as supplementary by the author himself, when he appended his account of the heretical sects to Chapter Four.

Regarding the Chapter headings, these are unnumbered in the Arabic text, so the numbers One through Seventeen have been supplied for convenience. In the Damascus edition, the important section on Marriage[6] is not designated as a Chapter, but it has been labeled Chapter Two in this translation, since the author subsequently refers to it as a "chapter *[bāb]*."[7]

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[6] Vol. 1, pp. 112–50.

[7] Vol. 5, p. 75.

- **Hard against the unbelievers.** [This is an allusion to] ʻUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.
- **Merciful one to another.** [This is an allusion to] ʻUthmān ibn ʻAffān.
- **You see them bowing and falling prostrate [in worship].** [This is an allusion to] ʻAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib.
- **Seeking bounty from Allāh and good pleasure.** [This is an allusion to] Ṭalḥa and az-Zubair, the two disciples *[ḥawāriyā]*[307] of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).
- **Their mark is on their faces, the trace of prostration.** [This is an allusion to] Saʻd [ibn Abī Waqqāṣ], Saʻīd [ibn Zaid], ʻAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʻAwf, and Abū ʻUbaida ibn al-Jarrāḥ. These make up the ten [who received glad tidings of the promise of Paradise].[308]
- **Such is their likeness in the Torah and their likeness in the Gospel—as a seed that puts forth its shoot.** This is a reference to Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).
- **And strengthens it** by means of Abū Bakr.
- **And it grows stout** by means of ʻUmar.
- **And it rises straight upon its stalk** by means of ʻUthmān.
- **Pleasing the sowers** by means of ʻAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib.
- **That through them**—through the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)—**He may enrage the unbelievers.**

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[307] As explained in note [62] on p. 83 above, the term *ḥawārī* is most often applied to a disciple of Jesus (peace be upon him).

[308] See note [293] on p. 255 above.

On the correctness of adopting a neutral attitude toward the conflicts that arose among the Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them all).

Those who remain faithful to the orthodox tradition of Islām *[ahl as-Sunna]* are in agreement concerning the necessity of suspending judgment on the issues over which the Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them all) came into conflict with one another, of adopting a neutral attitude toward their faults and failings, and of proclaiming their virtues and good qualities.

As we have already explained, whatever may have been the causes and consequences of the discord between ʿAlī, on the one hand, and Ṭalḥa, az-Zubair, ʿĀʾisha and Muʿāwiya on the other (may Allāh be well pleased with them all), it is now agreed that the verdict on their conduct should be left to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and that each should be given credit where credit is due.

As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> And as for those who came after them, they say: "Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who were before us in the faith, and do not lodge in our hearts any rancor toward those who believe. Our Lord, You are the All-Gentle *[ar-Raʾūf]*, the All-Compassionate *[ar-Raḥīm]*." (59:10)
>
> That is a community *[umma]* that has passed away. To their credit is that which they have earned, and to your credit is that which you have earned. And you will not be questioned concerning the things they used to do. (2:134 and 2:141)

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> When things are said about my Companions, refrain from passing judgment.

In another version of this traditional report, the words attributed to him (Allāh bless him and give him peace) are:

> Beware of [passing judgment on] the conflicts that flare up among my Companions, for, even if one of you were to contribute his own weight in gold, it would not equal the measure of one of them, nor would it amount to half as much.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Good betide anyone who has seen me, and anyone who has seen someone who has seen me![309]
>
> Do not revile my Companions. If anyone does revile them, may the curse of Allāh be upon him!

According to the traditional account *[riwāya]* of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), he also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has chosen me, and He has chosen my Companions for me, for He has made them my helpers *[anṣārī]* and He has made them my relatives by marriage *[aṣhārī]*. At the end of the age, there will emerge a set of people who will try to belittle them.
>
> On no account should you eat in the company of such people. On no account should you drink in their company. On no account should you marry into their families. On no account should you perform the ritual prayers together with them. On no account should you pray for them. May the curse [of Allāh] alight upon them!

As reported by Jābir (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Not one of those who made the pledge of allegiance beneath the tree[310] will enter the Fire of Hell.

As reported by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Allāh beheld the people [who fought in the battle] of Badr, and He said: "O people of Badr, do whatever you will, for I have already forgiven you!"

Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) reported that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> My Companions are just like the stars, so take the word of any one of them and you will be guided aright.

According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted by

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[309] *Ṭūbā li-man ra'ānī—wa li-man ra'ā man ra'ānī.*

[310] The pledge of allegiance known as *Bai'at ar-Riḍwān*, which was made beneath a tree at al-Ḥudaibiyya in the sixth year of the Hijra. (See p. 254 above.)

Ibn Buraida on the authority of his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If one of my Companions should happen to die in a particular country, he will be appointed as an intercessor *[shafī‘]* on behalf of the people of that country.

Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaina (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has said: "If anyone has a bad word to say about the Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), he must be the follower of an heretical sect."

◆

On the duty to obey the leaders of the Muslim community, and other matters on which a consensus has been reached among followers of the orthodox Islamic tradition.

Those who remain faithful to the orthodox tradition of Islām *[ahl as-Sunna]* are unanimously agreed that it is necessary to obey[311] the leaders *[aʾimma]*[312] of the Muslims, to follow their instructions, and to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* behind each and every one of them, whether he be pious or immoral, and whether he be just or unjust. The same obedience is due to all those who have been put in charge, or appointed to official posts, or had authority delegated to them by the leaders.

It is not proper to assert that any member of the Muslim community[313] is sure to end up in the Garden of Paradise or in the Fire of Hell, whether he be an obedient worshipper or a disobedient sinner, whether he be mature and reasonable or reckless and unstable, unless he is demonstrably guilty of heretical innovation *[bidʿa]* and of straying from the path of truth.

They are unanimously agreed on the assigning of major miracles *[muʿjizāt]* exclusively to the Prophets *[anbiyāʾ]*, and of lesser miracles or charismatic gifts *[karāmāt]* to the saints *[awliyāʾ]*.

They also agree that economic cycles of inflation and deflation *[al-ghalāʾ waʾr-rukhṣ]* must be attributed to the workings of Allāh, and are not subject to the control of any of his creatures, such as the sultans and kings, nor to the influence of the stars and planets, as the Qadariyya[314] and the Mujassimūn[315] would have us believe.

The correct view of this matter is based on the traditional report of

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[311] Literally, to hear and to obey *[as-samʿ waʾṭ-ṭāʿa]*.

[312] Plural of *imām*.

[313] Literally, the people who pray toward the Kaʿba in Mecca *[ahl al-Qibla]*.

[314] See note [240] on p. 214 above.

[315] The Corporealists, so called because they ascribe a physical body *[jism]* to Allāh.

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), according to whom Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The market forces of inflation and deflation *[al-ghalā' wa'r-rukhṣ]* are two units from the armies of Allāh. The name of one of them is scarceness *[raghba]*, and the name of the other is scariness *[rahba]*. Whenever Allāh wishes to inflate the price of a particular commodity, he instills a sense of scarceness in the hearts of the merchants, so they hoard that commodity. But when He wishes to deflate the price of an article, He instills a sense of scariness in the breasts of the traders, so they rush to get it off their hands.

The best course for the shrewd and intelligent believer to take is to follow the traditional path, and not to indulge in heretical innovation *[an yattabi'a wa lā yabtadi'a]*. He should beware of going to extremes, of getting too far out of his depth, and of taking too much upon himself, in case he loses his way, makes a serious slip, and meets his downfall.

As 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to say: "Follow the traditional path and do not indulge in heretical innovation, then you will stay out of trouble."

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "Beware of probing into matters that are very obscure, and of saying 'What can this be?' to everything you come across."

When Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) came to hear these words of Mu'ādh's, he remarked: "We had always been in the habit of saying 'What can this be?' to everything we came across, but not anymore!"

It is incumbent upon the believer to follow the Sunna and the Jamā'a. The Sunna is the exemplary precedent *[mā sanna]* set by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), while the Jamā'a is the common practice agreed upon by the Companions of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) during the Caliphate of the Four Imāms, the rightly guided Caliphs [Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all).

The believer ought not to emulate the heretical innovators *[ahl al-bida']*, nor should he give them any credit. He should not even salute them with the Islamic greeting, because our Imām, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has said: "If someone gives the Islamic greeting to a person who is guilty of heretical innovation *[ṣāḥib bid'a]*, he is likely to become fond of that person, in view of the saying

On the good manners to be observed when traveling *[ādāb as-safar]* and on how to relate to fellow travelers.

When a person is proposing to set out on a journey, a Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* or a military expedition *[ghazw]*, or to move from one house to another, or to go in pursuit of something he needs, he should perform a ritual prayer of two cycles *[yuṣalli rakʿatain]*, then embark on his quest or undertake his move.

In the case of a journey, he should say the following words after completing the two cycles of prayer:

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
convey a communication	*balligh balāghan*
that conveys a blessing	*muballigha khairin*
and forgiveness from You,	*wa maghfiratan minka*
and a sign of approval.	*wa riḍwānā.*
All goodness is in Your hand,	*bi-yadika'l-khairu*
and You are Powerful	*wa Anta ʿalā kulli*
over all things.	*shai'in Qadīr.*
O Allāh, You are the	*Allāhumma*
Companion on the journey,	*Anta'ṣ-Ṣāḥibu fi's-safari*
and the Deputy in charge of	*wa'l-Khalīfatu*
the wife, the property and	*fi'l-ahli wa 'l-māli*
the children (left at home).	*wa'l-wuld.*
O Allāh, make the journey	*Allāhumma hawwin*
a smooth one for us,	*ʿalaina's-safar:*
and make the distance	*wa'ṭwi*
seem short to us.	*ʿanna'l-buʿd.*
O Allāh, I take refuge with	*Allāhumma innī*
You from hardship	*aʿūdhu bika*
on the journey,	*min waʿthā'i's-safar:*
and from trouble	*wa ka'ābati'l-*
on the way home,	*munqalab:*
and from finding that things	*wa sū'i'l-manẓari*
look bad where the wife,	*fi'l-ahli*
the children and the	*wa'l-wuldi*
property are concerned.	*wa'l-māl.*

should beseech Allāh (Exalted is He) to forgive his sins, even if his good works are few and far between. And if you happen to catch sight of an heretical innovator *[mubtadi']* on the road, you had better take a different road!"

Fuḍail ibn 'Iyāḍ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has also said: "I once heard Sufyān ibn 'Uyaina (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) saying: 'If someone follows the funeral procession *[janāza]* of an heretical innovator, he will not cease to be exposed to the displeasure of Allāh (Exalted is He), until he turns around and leaves it.'"

The Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has cursed the heretical innovator, for he has said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If a person originates a mischievous innovation *[aḥdatha ḥadathan]*, or offers hospitality to a mischief-making innovator *[muḥdith]*, may he be exposed to the curse of Allāh, of the angels, and of all mankind, and may Allāh refuse to accept from him both the full load *[ṣirf]* and the half load *['idl]*.

What he means by 'the full load' is the performance of obligatory religious duty *[farīḍa]*, and by 'the half load' he means the supererogatory act of worship *[nāfila]*.

Abū Ayyūb as-Sijistānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"If a man is told about the Sunna, and he responds by saying: 'Never mind about that! Talk to us about what is in the Qur'ān,' you can be sure that he has gone astray."

On the distinctive features of the various sects responsible for the introduction of heretical innovations *[ahl al-bida']*.

You need to be aware that the various sects responsible for the introduction of heretical innovations *[ahl al-bida']* have distinctive features by which they can be recognized.

The distinctive feature of the proponents of a particular heretical innovation can be identified by noting the term of contempt by which they choose to misrepresent the loyal followers of the Tradition *[ahl al-Athar]*.

In the case of the Freethinkers *[Zanādiqa]*,[316] it is the fact that they refer to the followers of the Tradition as the "Trash Collectors" *[Ḥashwiyya]*,[317] and that they would like to see the traditions *[āthār]* dismissed as completely worthless.

The distinctive feature of the Qadariyya[318] is the fact that they refer to the followers of the Tradition as "Compulsives" *[Mujbara]*.[319]
In the case of the Jahmiyya[320] it is the fact that they refer to the followers of the Tradition[321] as "Anthropomorphists" *[Mushabbiha]*.[322]

[316] Some authorities derive the word *Zindiq* (of which *Zanādiqa* is the plural form) from the Persian *Zand* or *Zend*, meaning the commentary on the book of Zoroaster. The Arabic lexicographers give a wide range of meanings for *Zindiq*, including: "Dualist, atheist, one who believes in the eternity of this world; a follower of Mani or Mazdak, one who does not follow any religion, a freethinker." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. Z–N–D–Q.) According to L. Massignon: "The polemics of the conservatives describe as a *zindiq* ...any one whose external profession of Islām seems to them not sufficiently sincere." (See: *SEI*, art. ZINDIQ.)

[317] According to the anonymous author of the article ḤASHWIYA in *SEI*: " [This is] a contemptuous term for those among the men of Tradition *(ashāb al-hadīth)* who recognized the coarsely anthropomorphic traditions as genuine, without criticism and even with a kind of preference, and interpreted them literally."

[318] On the Qadariyya, see note 240 on p. 214 above.

[319] The Mujbara (also known as the Jabariyya) are a sect who condone "compulsive" behavior, since they assert that man has no power whatsoever to control his ownactions, and that Allāh compels His servants to commit sins.

[320] On the Jahmiyya, see note 185 on p. 183 above.

[321] In this particular sentence, the author uses the term *ahl as-Sunna*, rather than *ahl al-Athar*, which is otherwise repeated throughout the paragraph. The terms are clearly synonymous in this context.

[322] On the Anthropomorphists *[Mushabbiha]*, see note 171 on page 178 above.

> no bigger than the tip of a man's thumb will then be produced. (As he was saying this, the Prophet squeezed half of his own thumb between his fingers.)[276]
>
> It will contain the declaration of faith *[shahāda]*, testifying that there is no god but Allāh, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh *[an lā ilāha illa'llāh wa anna Muhammadan Rasūlu'llāh]*. This will be placed in the scale of his good deeds, causing his good deeds to weigh heavier than his evil deeds, so the order will then be given for him to be led off to the Garden of Paradise.[277]

It has been said that the weights *[ṣanj]* to be used on that Day [of Resurrection] will be those that are now used to measure tiny grains and mustard seeds.

Good deeds will take the form of some beautiful object, which will be cast into the scale of radiant light. The Balance will then record the weight of it as heavy, because of the mercy *[raḥma]* of Allāh. Evil deeds will take the form of some foul object, which will be cast into the scale of darkness. The Balance will then register the weight of it as light, because of the justice *['adl]* of Allāh (Exalted is He).

The Balance will indicate the presence of a heavy weight by the upward motion of the scale, and of a light weight by the downward motion of the scale, contrary to the balances of this world. What causes it to register a heavy weight will be faith *[īmān]* and the utterance of the twofold declaration of belief *[qawl ash-shahādatain]*, and what causes it to register a light weight will be the ascription of partners *[shirk]* to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). If the scale moves upward, the person concerned will be admitted to the Garden of Paradise, because it is up on high. But if it registers a light weight, the person concerned will be made to enter the bottomless pit of the Fire of Hell, because it is in the region of the lowest of the low. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> Then he whose deeds weigh heavy in the scales shall inherit a pleasing life, but he whose deeds weigh light in the scales, his mother shall be the Pit. (101:6–9)

In other words, the former shall dwell in a Garden of Paradise on high,

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[276] This sentence represents a parenthetic observation by the narrator of the tradition *[hadīth]*, interjected to give graphic effect to the words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[277] ***Author's note***: In a slightly different version, the wording is: "A scrap of paper *[qirṭās]* no bigger than this—the Prophet squeezed his thumb to demonstrate—will be produced on his behalf. It will contain the declaration of faith *[shahāda]*, testifying that there is no god but Allāh, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh *[an lā ilāha illa'llāh—wa anna Muhammadan Rasūlu'llāh]*. . . ." The rest of the tradition *[hadīth]* is narrated in the same words as the version quoted in the text.

On the Caliphate of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

As for the Caliphate of ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him), he was designated to succeed to it by Abū Bakr himself (may Allāh be well pleased with him), so all the Companions willingly agreed to pledge their allegiance to him, and to call him by the title “Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Mu’minīn]*.”

According to the statement of ʿAbdu’llāh ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father): “They said to Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him): ‘What will you say to your Lord, when you meet Him tomorrow [at the Resurrection], knowing that you designated ʿUmar to succeed you as our Caliph, even though you were fully aware of his coarse severity?’ But he replied: ‘I shall say: “I designated the best of Your people to succeed me as their Caliph.”’”

◆

should beseech Allāh (Exalted is He) to forgive his sins, even if his good works are few and far between. And if you happen to catch sight of an heretical innovator *[mubtadi']* on the road, you had better take a different road!"

Fuḍail ibn ʿIyāḍ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has also said: "I once heard Sufyān ibn ʿUyaina (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) saying: 'If someone follows the funeral procession *[janāza]* of an heretical innovator, he will not cease to be exposed to the displeasure of Allāh (Exalted is He), until he turns around and leaves it.'"

The Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has cursed the heretical innovator, for he has said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If a person originates a mischievous innovation *[aḥdatha ḥadathan]*, or offers hospitality to a mischief-making innovator *[muḥdith]*, may he be exposed to the curse of Allāh, of the angels, and of all mankind, and may Allāh refuse to accept from him both the full load *[ṣirf]* and the half load *[ʿidl]*.

What he means by 'the full load' is the performance of obligatory religious duty *[farīḍa]*, and by 'the half load' he means the supererogatory act of worship *[nāfila]*.

Abū Ayyūb as-Sijistānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"If a man is told about the Sunna, and he responds by saying: 'Never mind about that! Talk to us about what is in the Qur'ān,' you can be sure that he has gone astray."

On the good manners to be observed when traveling *[ādāb as-safar]* and on how to relate to fellow travelers.

When a person is proposing to set out on a journey, a Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* or a military expedition *[ghazw]*, or to move from one house to another, or to go in pursuit of something he needs, he should perform a ritual prayer of two cycles *[yuṣallī rak'atain]*, then embark on his quest or undertake his move.

In the case of a journey, he should say the following words after completing the two cycles of prayer:

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
convey a communication	*balligh balāghan*
that conveys a blessing	*muballigha khairin*
and forgiveness from You,	*wa maghfiratan minka*
and a sign of approval.	*wa riḍwānā.*
All goodness is in Your hand,	*bi-yadika'l-khairu*
and You are Powerful	*wa Anta 'alā kulli*
over all things.	*shai'in Qadīr.*
O Allāh, You are the	*Allāhumma*
Companion on the journey,	*Anta'ṣ-Ṣāḥibu fi's-safari*
and the Deputy in charge of	*wa'l-Khalīfatu*
the wife, the property and	*fi'l-ahli wa 'l-māli*
the children (left at home).	*wa'l-wuld.*
O Allāh, make the journey	*Allāhumma hawwin*
a smooth one for us,	*'alaina's-safar:*
and make the distance	*wa'ṭwi*
seem short to us.	*'annā'l-bu'd.*
O Allāh, I take refuge with	*Allāhumma innī*
You from hardship	*a'ūdhu bika*
on the journey,	*min wa'thā'i's-safar:*
and from trouble	*wa ka'ābati'l-*
on the way home,	*munqalab:*
and from finding that things	*wa sū'i'l-manẓari*
look bad where the wife,	*fi'l-ahli*
the children and the	*wa'l-wuldi*
property are concerned.	*wa'l-māl.*

ʿAtīq:	(1) Outstripping. (2) Admirably generous or excellent. (3) Fine, delicate, comely. (4) Emancipated, freed from slavery.[333] (5) Old, ancient.[334] (6) Wine.
Faqīh:	(1) Possessing knowledge and understanding. (2) A legist, an expert in the canonical jurisprudence *[fiqh]* of Islām.
Fahīm:	Good at comprehending, shrewd, sensible, discerning, judicious, intelligent.
Faṭin:	Clever, smart, astute, sagacious, perspicacious, bright, intelligent.
Muḥaqqiq:	(1) Scrutinizing, meticulous, careful to ascertain the true facts. (2) A literary editor and critic.
ʿĀqil:	(1) Intelligent, reasonable, understanding, sensible, rational, discerning, prudent, judicious, wise. (2) In full possession of one's mental faculties, compos mentis, sane in mind. (3) One who pays the bloodwit to the heirs of a person who has been killed unintentionally.
Muwaqqar:	(1) Venerable, reverend. (2) Heavily laden.
Ṭayyib:	(1) Good, pleasant, agreeable. (2) Well-disposed, friendly, kindly. (3) Delicious, tasty.

There are some, however, who maintain that *Ṭayyib* is permissible as an epithet for Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He.)

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[332] Many of the Arabic words in this list have several possible meanings, or at least several distinctly significant shades of meaning. This makes it rather difficult for the translator to offer a single word, or even a short phrase, as a reasonably exact English equivalent of each Arabic term. In some cases, the author himself (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has drawn attention to an ambiguity, and has added a helpful note of clarification. For a satisfactory understanding of this passage, however, it seems necessary to provide a full range of possible meanings and nuances for each of the Arabic terms listed here as inappropriate epithets for Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

[333] In addition to his more commonly known appellation *as-Ṣiddīq* [the Champion of Truth], Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was also given the surname *al-ʿAtīq*. According to one traditional account, this was in recognition of his having been told by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) that he was emancipated *[ʿatīq]* from the Fire of Hell and assured of a place in the Garden of Paradise.

[334] The adjective *ʿatīq* is usually interpreted in this sense when it occurs in the Qurʾān as an appellation of the Kaʿba, because it was the first house founded upon the earth:

> The first House established for mankind was that at Becca [= Mecca], a blessed place, and a guidance to all beings. (3:96)
>
> Let them then finish with their self-neglect and let them fulfill their vows, and let them go around the Ancient House *[al-Bait al-ʿAtīq]*. (22:29)
>
> There are things therein profitable to you unto a stated term; and afterward their lawful place of sacrifice is by the Ancient House *[al-Bait al-ʿAtīq]*. (22:33)

ʿĀdiyy: Old, ancient.

This cannot be appropriate, because it is the adjective applied to the era of the [ancient and extinct] tribe of ʿĀd, which was brought into existence at a certain point in time *[muḥdath]*.

Muṭīq: Competent, capable, possessing a faculty or capability *[ṭāqa]*.

This cannot be applied to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), because He is the Creator of every faculty or capability *[ṭāqa]*, and all faculties or capabilities are finite *[mutanāhiya]*.

Maḥfūẓ: (1) Kept safe, preserved, treasured, taken care of. (2) Committed to memory.

This cannot be appropriate as an epithet for Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), because He is the Preserver *[al-Ḥāfiẓ]*.[335]

Sexual intercourse *[mubāshara]* cannot be attributed to Him.[336]

It is not permissible to describe Him as *muktasib* [acquisitive],[337] because an acquisition is brought into existence at a given point in time *[muḥdath]*, by means of a capacity for novel invention *[qudra muḥditha]*, and Allāh (Exalted is He) is far above and beyond anything of this kind.

Nonexistence *[ʿadam]* is inconceivable with respect to Him, for He is Infinitely Pre-Existent *[Qadīm lā bi-qidam]*. There is no starting point to His existence *[lā awwal li-wujūdih]*, contrary to the assertion made by Ibn Kullāb, to the effect that He is Pre-Existent, but not infinitely so *[Qadīm bi-qidam]*.

He is also Infinitely Enduring *[Bāqin lā bi-bāqāʾ]*. Infinite are the facts of which He (Almighty and Glorious is He) has knowledge, and infinite are the destinies which He has the power to determine,[338] contrary to the doctrine propagated by the Muʿtazila,[339] who would have us believe that these are finite.

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[335] *Ḥāfiẓ* is the active participle of the root *ḥ-f-ẓ*, while *maḥfūẓ* is the passive participle of that same root. The latter is applied in the Qurʾān (85:22) to the "Treasured Tablet" *[Lauḥ Maḥfūẓ]*, on which the Divine decrees have been inscribed from all eternity.

[336] While the term *mubāshara* does usually refer specifically to "the [enjoyment of] contact with a woman, skin to skin," with the implication that this involves sexual intercourse, it is possible that this statement is intended as a more general refutation of certain anthropomorphic doctrines, in which case it should be rendered: "It is not permissible to attribute any form of physical contact *[mubāshara]* to Him."

[337] According to the Arabic lexicographers, the full sense of the term *muktasib* is: "One who applies himself with skill and diligence to get [or obtain, or acquire, or gain, or earn] sustenance." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *K–S–B*.)

[338] *Huwa (ʿazza wa jalla) ʿĀlimun bi-maʿlūmātin ghairi mutanāhiya—Qādirun bi-maqdūrātin ghairi mutanāhiya.*

[339] See note [174] on p. 178 above.

As for those attributes which it is permissible to ascribe to Him (Almighty and Glorious is He), they include happiness *[faraḥ]*, laughter *[ḍaḥk]*, anger *[ghaḍab]*, displeasure *[sakhaṭ]* and contentment *[riḍā]*. (We have already mentioned this at the beginning of the chapter.)

It must be permissible to refer to Him as "[there to be] Found" *[Maujūd]*,[340] since He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> And as for those who disbelieve, their works are as a mirage in a spacious plain. The thirsty man supposes it to be water, till he comes to it and finds it is nothing, and instead of it he finds Allāh *[wajada'llāha 'indahu]*. (24:39)

It must also be permissible to refer to Him as "a Thing" *[Shai']*, in view of His own words (Exalted is He):

> Say: "What thing *[ayyu shai'in]* is greatest in testimony?" Say: "Allāh." (6:19)

He may properly be referred to as "a Person" or "an Individual" *[Nafs* or *Dhāt* or *'Ain]*,[341] without any anthropomorphic comparison being implied, as we have previously explained.

He may be referred to as "Being" *[Kā'in]*,[342] without specific definition, in view of His own words (Exalted is He):

> And **Allāh** is Aware of all things ***[kāna'llāhu** bi kulli shai'in 'Alīmā]*. (33:40)
>
> And **Allāh** is Watchful over all things ***[kāna'llāhu** bi kulli shai'in Raqībā]*. (33:52)

It is permissible to characterize Him as all of the following:[343]

Qadīm: Ancient [without beginning], Infinitely Pre-Existent, Sempiternal.[344]

Bāqin:[345] Everlasting, Eternal.

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[340] As the passive participle of the verb *wajada*, the word *maujūd* means simply "found." By extension, it then comes to signify: (1) There to be found, available, on hand, existing, existent. (2) Actually present. (3) A living being.

[341] As used in non-specific contexts, these three Arabic words are virtual synonyms, and, like "a person" or "an individual" in corresponding English usage, they mean little more than "someone."

[342] The Arabic word *kā'in* is the participle of the verb "to be" *[kāna]*, so it could also be translated as "one who is." Here, as in many instances in this section of his work, the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is making a point which defies straightforward translation into English, since it is so inextricably bound up with the subtleties of Arabic word and sentence formation.

[343] As in the case of the impermissible epithets listed previously (see pp. 281–84 above), many of these Arabic terms have a wide range of possible meanings and nuances. In this case, however, the translator has confined himself to supplying only the more directly relevant English equivalents, since the author himself (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has provided quite extensive notes of explanation in most instances.

[344] As an ordinary adjective, *qadīm* means "old; ancient"—as in *māl qadīm* [old, or long-possessed, property.] As an epithet applied to Allāh, *al-Qadīm* is often reinforced by the addition of *al-Azalī* [Existing from all eternity].

[345] Since the final -n is not a root consonant, the word assumes the form *al-Bāqī* when the definite article is prefixed to it.

no capital letters, and the letters of each word are most often closely linked together, in print as well as in handwriting. The name "Muḥammad" is therefore spelled *mḥmd*, and the whole name in Arabic takes up little more space than the initial "M" of the transliterated form.

•Due to significant differences in word formation, grammar and syntax, the typical Arabic sentence is more concise than its English counterpart. Let me offer just one rather striking example: The single Arabic word *kabbir* (simply *kbr* in writing or print) means: "Proclaim the Supreme Greatness of the One Almighty God." It is true that "Say, '*Allāhu Akbar*'" could qualify as a translation of sorts—despite being two-thirds Arabic—but even this shorter expression is still about five times the length of *kbr*.

•In the Damascus edition of *al-Ghunya*, on which the present translation is almost entirely based, the editor has supplied about a dozen footnotes, all of them quite brief. The contrast here is particularly stark, since the translator has provided hundreds of footnotes, many of them quite lengthy.

Enough said, I trust, to explain why *Sufficient Provision* has been published in several volumes. Attention to the subject matter has resulted in this particular five-volume set, following dividing lines apparent in the structure and contents of the work.

Of the points that remain to be clarified, the most important concerns the editorial treatment of Volume One, where certain subsections have been assigned to the Appendices. As for the material presented in Appendix 1, this consists of selections from the Book of Good Manners *[Kitāb al-Ādāb]*, most of them relating quite specifically to physical situations and cultural conditions that are likely to be remote from the everyday experience of our readers. In the case of Appendix 2, the material was actually classed as supplementary by the author himself, when he appended his account of the heretical sects to Chapter Four.

Regarding the Chapter headings, these are unnumbered in the Arabic text, so the numbers One through Seventeen have been supplied for convenience. In the Damascus edition, the important section on Marriage[6] is not designated as a Chapter, but it has been labeled Chapter Two in this translation, since the author subsequently refers to it as a "chapter *[bāb]*."[7]

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[6] Vol. 1, pp. 112–50.

[7] Vol. 5, p. 75.

proverbial saying: "As you repay, so shall you be repaid *[kamā tadīnu tudān]*," and Allāh describes Himself in the Qur'an as "Master of the Day of *Dīn*"[351]—that is, of the Day of Reckoning.

The term may also be applied to Him in the sense that He is the Lawgiver *[Shāri']* for His servants, meaning that He has prescribed a form of religious worship *['ibāda]* and a sacred law *[shar'ia]*, that He has summoned them to follow it as their obligatory duty, and that He will then recompense them according to how they act in fulfillment of that duty.

Muqaddir: One who determines or decrees. (1) In the sense of predetermination *[taqdīr]*, as in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> Surely We have created everything in predetermined measure *[bi-qadar]*. (54:49)

> Glorify the Name of your Lord the Most High, who created and shaped, who determined *[qaddara]* and guided. (87:1–3)

(2) In the sense of information *[khabar]*, as in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> Except his wife, of whom We had decreed *[qaddarnā]* that she should be among those who stay behind. (15:60)

In other words: "We had informed *[akhbarnā]* Lot (peace be upon him) that his wife was one of those who would remain behind in torment, while the rest of his family escaped with him."

When used in reference to Allāh, the term must not convey the meaning of guesswork and doubtful speculation [which it may carry in some ordinary contexts].[352] Exalted is Allāh, far above and beyond anything of the kind!

Nāẓir: Observer.

This is permissible in the sense that He is One who sees *[Rā'in]*, who consciously perceives *[Mudrik]* things, but not when it is synonymous with *mutarawwin* [one who ponders and reflects] or *mutafakkir* [one who cogitates and meditates].

Shafīq: Kind, Compassionate.

It is permissible in this sense, when it refers to His mercy and gentle kindness toward His creatures, but not when it bears implications of fear and sadness.[353]

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[351] *Māliki Yawmi'd-Dīn*. (1:4)

[352] The Arabic verb *qaddara* (of which *taqdīr* is the verbal noun, and *muqaddir* the active participle) has a wide range of possible meanings. In some contexts it signifies "to surmise, guess, assume, presume, suppose...."

[353] As an ordinary adjective, *shafīq* sometimes means "sympathetic, affectionate, tender, kind," but it may also mean "fearful, filled with unhappy misgivings."

Rafīq:	Gentle, Tender.

This is permissible only when intended to convey the sense of His compassion and tender disposition toward His creatures, not if it would be understood as referring to the efficient and convenient handling of worldly affairs, and to ensuring immunity from their consequences.[354]

Sakhiyy:	Liberal, Bountiful, Munificent, Generous.
Karīm:	Generous, Liberal, Munificent, Beneficent.
Jawād:	Liberal, Generous, Bountiful, Munificent.

Sakhiyy is permissible in this sense, as a synonym of *Karīm* and *Jawād*, because the meaning common to all three terms is Allāh's bountiful favor *[tafaḍḍul]* and beneficence *[iḥsān]* toward His creatures. It must not be intended, however, to convey the notion of softness *[rakhāwa]* and pliability *[līn]*, which it may sometimes signify in ordinary linguistic usage, as for instance in the expressions *arḍ sakhiyya* [a piece of earth that is soft and easy to work] and *qirṭās sakhiyy* [a pliable sheet of paper].[355]

Āmir:	Commanding; One who issues positive commandments.
Nāhin:[356]	Prohibiting; One who lays down negative commandments or prohibitions.
Muḥarrim:	Illegitimating; One who declares certain things, and certain actions, to be illegitimate or unlawful *[ḥarām]*.
Fāriḍ:	Obligating; One who imposes obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]*.
Mulzim:	Enjoining; One who makes the fulfillment of certain obligations compulsory.
Mūjib:	Necessitating; One who places His servants under the necessity of performing certain duties.
Nādib:	Recommending; One who urgently recommends certain forms of behavior, even if He has not prescribed them as absolutely essential.

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[354] As an ordinary adjective, *rafīq* means: (1) Gentle, soft, tender, gracious, courteous, civil. (2) Neat or skillful in work or operation, whence the expression *hādha'l-amru rafīqun bika* ["This business is easy, or convenient, for you."](As a noun, *rafīq* means "a companion, [especially] a traveling companion.")

[355] In these and similar expressions, as the author notes, the adjective *sakhiyy* (or *sakhiyya*, when it is required to agree with a grammatically feminine noun, such as *arḍ*) is synonymous not with *karīm* and *jawād*, but with *layyin*, meaning "soft; flabby, feeble; flexible, pliable, yielding; pliant, supple, resilient, elastic, tractable."

[356] Since the final -n is not a root consonant, the word assumes the form *al-Nāhī* (pronounced *an-Nāhī*) when the definite article is prefixed to it.

Murshid:	Director, Guide; One who shows His servants the right path.
Qāḍin:[357]	Judge; One who preordains the fate *[qāḍā']* of His creatures.
Ḥākim:	Ruler, Governor. (As we have already mentioned elsewhere in this work.[358])
Wā'id:	Promising; One who promises to reward His servants for obedient conduct.
Mutawa''id:	Threatening, Menacing; One who threatens to punish His servants for disobedient conduct.
Mukhawwif:	Fear-inspiring; One who puts His servants in fear of disobeying Him.
Muḥadhdhir:	Cautioning; One who warns His servants to beware of disobeying Him.[359]
Dhāmm:	Blaming, Dispraising; One who gives blame where blame is due.
Mādiḥ:	Praising, Commending; One who gives praise where praise is due.
Mukhāṭib:	Conversing, Discoursing; One who may address a servant of His in intelligible speech.
Mutakallim:	Speaker; One who uses the spoken word.
Qā'il:	Sayer; One who utters sayings in language intelligible to His human creatures.

All of these *[Mukhāṭib, Mutakallim* and *Qā'il]* can be traced back to the same concept, namely that the faculty of speech *[kalām]* is rightly attributed to Him.

Mu'dim:	Annihilating; One who can cause things to cease to exist. [In some contexts, however, the same word means "deprived, destitute, reduced to nought, unmade." This passive meaning is relevant to the first sentence in the following paragraph.]

It is permissible to characterize Him as *Mu'dim* in the sense that He has not been caused to exist *[lam yūjad]* and has not been made *[lam yuf'al]*. The same epithet is also appropriate in the sense that He is One who annihilates that which He has brought into existence *[mā awjadahu]*, after having caused it to exist *[bāʿda ījādihi]*, by depriving it of continued survival, with the result that it becomes nonexistent *[yanʿadim]*.

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[357] Since the final *-n* is not a root consonant, the word assumes the form *al-Qāḍī* when the definite article is prefixed to it.

[358] See p. 172 above.

[359] The verb *yuḥadhdhiru*, of which *muḥadhdhir* is the corresponding active participle, occurs twice in the Qur'ān:

> Allāh warns you to beware *[yuḥadhdhirukum]* of Himself. (3:28 and 30)

Fāʿil: Active; Effective; Doer; One who does things; One who effectively brings things about.

It is permissible to characterize Him as such in the sense that He is One who originates the essence of whatever He does *[Mukhtariʿun li-dhāti mā faʿala]*, who creates it *[Khāliqun lah]*, and who brings it into being through His power *[Jāʿil bi-qudratih]*.

Only in this sense can the epithet properly be applied to Him, not in the sense of physical contact *[mubāshara]* with things, because what this actually signifies is the mutual encounter and contiguity of material substances, and Allāh (Glory be to Him) is Exalted far above and beyond anything of the kind!

Jāʿil: One who brings things about; One who can cause a thing to assume a certain form, or to serve a particular purpose.

It is permissible to characterize Him as such in the sense that He is One who acts *[Fāʿil]*, and whose action produces a result *[fiʿluhu mafʿūl]*. To quote His own words (Exalted is He):

> And We have brought about *[jaʿalnā]*[160] the night and the day, to serve as two signs. (17:12)

The act of bringing about *[jaʿl]* may also convey the sense of deciding by decree *[ḥukm]*. For instance, He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> We have decreed that it should be *[jaʿalnāhu]* an Arabic Qurʾān. (43:3)

Tārik: Canceller; One who may cancel out what He has done. [In ordinary contexts, *tārik* often means "leaving, abandoning; abstaining, refraining."]

It is in fact permissible to characterize Him as One who may cancel things out, just as He has been characterized as One who effectively brings things about *[Fāʿil]*, in the sense that He may do something that is the opposite of something else He has done, as a substitute for what He did in the first place *[badalan min al-awwal]*, by means of His universal and all-embracing power. This epithet may not be applied to Him, however, if it could be understood to convey the [more ordinary] meaning of curbing the lower self [*nafs*] and obliging it to abstain from what it is tempted to do.

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[160] *Jāʿil* is the active participle corresponding to the verb *jaʿala*, of which the form *jaʿalnā* is used when the grammatical subject is first person plural.

Mūjid: Originator; One who brings into being.

It is permissible to characterize Him by saying that He brings into being [*yūjid*], in the sense that He creates [*yakhluq*].

Mukawwin: Originator; One who brings into being.

This epithet may also be applied to Him, as a synonym of *Mūjid*.

Muthbit:[361] One who establishes and confirms.

It is permissible to characterize Him thus, in the sense that He can endow a particular thing with permanence [*baqā'*] and stability [*thabāt*].

To quote His own words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> Allāh confirms [*yuthabbitu*] those who believe with the firm saying [*bi'l-qauli'th-thābit*]. (14:27)

> Allāh blots out whatever He will, and [whatever He will] He confirms [*yuthbitu*], and with Him is the Essence of the Book [*Ummu'l-Kitāb*]. (13:39)

'Āmil: Worker; Producer.

Ṣāni': Maker.

It is permissible to characterize Him as Producer [*'Āmil*] and Maker [*Ṣāni'*] in the sense of Creator [*Khāliq*].

Muṣīb: Accurate; One who achieves His aim and purpose with exact precision. [In some ordinary contexts, it may mean "one who carries out his instructions with meticulous care and accuracy."]

It is permissible to characterize Him as such, in the sense that His actions [*af'āl*] always achieve exactly what He proposes and wishes to achieve, without the slightest disparity, and with no trace of excess or deficiency, because He (Exalted is He) knows all there is to know about those actions, their essential properties [*ḥaqā'iq*] and their specific modalities [*kaifiyyāt*].

This epithet could not be applied to Him, however, if it would be understood to mean that these meticulously accurate results were achieved in compliance with the commandment of some commander who commanded Him to achieve them. Exalted is He, far above and beyond anything of the kind!

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[361] Since only the consonantal outline of this word [*m–th–b–t*] appears in the printed text, it could equally well be read as *Muthabbit* (the participle corresponding to the verb *yuthabbitu*), which is a virtual synonym of *Muthbit* (the participle corresponding to the verb *yuthbitu*). Like the noun *thabāt* [stability] and the adjective *thābit* [stable, firm] both of which occur in this passage, all of these words are derived from the same Arabic root, namely *th–b–t*.

It is quite permissible, of course, to apply this adjective to a servant of His, of whom it can be said that he is *muṣīb* in the sense that he is obedient to his Lord, diligent in carrying out His commandments and careful to observe His prohibitions. It may likewise be used [in a worldly context] to describe a person who is obedient to his superiors and to his chief. It is also permissible to use the related term *ṣawāb*[362] [right, proper, correct] to characterize His actions (Almighty and Glorious is He), in the sense that they are true *[ḥaqq]* and certain *[thābit]*.

Muthīb:	Rewarding, Recompensing, Requiting.
Mun'im:	Benefactor; One who bestows gracious favors.

It is permissible to characterize Him as One who confers rewards and bestows gracious favors, in the sense that He will treat any servant of His who deserves to be rewarded *[muthāb]* as the highly honored recipient of His gracious favor *[mun'am mu'azzam]*.

Mu'āqib:	Punishing, Chastising.
Mujāzin:[363]	One who exacts retribution.

It is likewise permissible to characterize Him as One who imposes punishment and exacts retribution, in the sense that He will humiliate the disobedient sinner and will cause him to suffer on account of his sinful disobedience.

Qadīm al-Iḥsān:	Beneficent from All Eternity.

It is permissible to characterize Him thus, in the sense that creation *[khalq]* and providence *[rizq]* can be attributed to Him in infinite antiquity *[fi'l-qidam]*. As He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> But as for those unto whom the reward most fair *[al-husnā]* has already gone forth from Us.... (21:101)

Dalīl:	Guide.

It is certainly permissible to apply this epithet to Him, as Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once

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[362] The words *muṣīb* and *ṣawāb* are both derived from the same Arabic root, namely *ṣ–w–b*. The connection would be more apparent, if it were not for the fact that the theoretical form *muṣwib* is actually written, as it is pronounced, with a long –ī– in place of the –wi–.

[363] Since the final *-n* is not a root consonant, the word assumes the form *al-Mujāzī* when the definite article is prefixed to it.

Rafīq:	Gentle, Tender.

This is permissible only when intended to convey the sense of His compassion and tender disposition toward His creatures, not if it would be understood as referring to the efficient and convenient handling of worldly affairs, and to ensuring immunity from their consequences.[354]

Sakhiyy:	Liberal, Bountiful, Munificent, Generous.
Karīm:	Generous, Liberal, Munificent, Beneficent.
Jawād:	Liberal, Generous, Bountiful, Munificent.

Sakhiyy is permissible in this sense, as a synonym of *Karīm* and *Jawād*, because the meaning common to all three terms is Allāh's bountiful favor *[tafaḍḍul]* and beneficence *[iḥsān]* toward His creatures. It must not be intended, however, to convey the notion of softness *[rakhāwa]* and pliability *[līn]*, which it may sometimes signify in ordinary linguistic usage, as for instance in the expressions *arḍ sakhiyya* [a piece of earth that is soft and easy to work] and *qirṭās sakhiyy* [a pliable sheet of paper].[355]

Āmir:	Commanding; One who issues positive commandments.
Nāhin:[356]	Prohibiting; One who lays down negative commandments or prohibitions.
Muḥarrim:	Illegitimating; One who declares certain things, and certain actions, to be illegitimate or unlawful *[ḥarām]*.
Fāriḍ:	Obligating; One who imposes obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]*.
Mulzim:	Enjoining; One who makes the fulfillment of certain obligations compulsory.
Mūjib:	Necessitating; One who places His servants under the necessity of performing certain duties.
Nādib:	Recommending; One who urgently recommends certain forms of behavior, even if He has not prescribed them as absolutely essential.

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[354] As an ordinary adjective, *rafīq* means: (1) Gentle, soft, tender, gracious, courteous, civil. (2) Neat or skillful in work or operation, whence the expression *hādha'l-amru rafīqun bika* ["This business is easy, or convenient, for you."](As a noun, *rafīq* means "a companion, [especially] a traveling companion.")

[355] In these and similar expressions, as the author notes, the adjective *sakhiyy* (or *sakhiyya*, when it is required to agree with a grammatically feminine noun, such as *arḍ*) is synonymous not with *karīm* and *jawād*, but with *layyin*, meaning "soft; flabby, feeble; flexible, pliable, yielding; pliant, supple, resilient, elastic, tractable."

[356] Since the final -n is not a root consonant, the word assumes the form *al-Nāhī* (pronounced *an-Nāhī*) when the definite article is prefixed to it.

We presented a list of ninety-nine [Divine] Names at an earlier point in this work,[366] since their appropriateness for use in prayers of supplication is more definitely confirmed.

If the reader also wishes to characterize Him and to invoke Him by using some of the expressions we have mentioned in this supplementary subsection, he is of course at liberty to do so. When making his prayer of supplication, however, he should be careful to refrain from invoking Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) by uttering any of the following:

Yā Sākhir	O Mocker!
Yā Mustahziʾ	O Ridiculer!
Yā Mākir	O Cunning One!
Yā Khādiʿ	O Deceiver![367]
Mubghiḍ	Hater.
Ghaḍbān	Wrathful One.
Muntaqim	Avenger.
Muʿādin [368]	Antagonist.
Muʿdim	Annihilator.[369]
Muhlik	Destroyer.

None of these epithets should be used in addressing prayers of supplication to Allāh, even though they are all appropriate when it comes to characterizing Him in the context of the punishment and retribution He has in store for those who are guilty of wrongdoing, for in that context they are proper expressions of scorn and disdain.

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[366] See pp. 197–202 above.

[367] This epithet is applied to Allāh in the Qurʾān:

> The hypocrites seek to deceive Allāh, but He is their Deceiver *[inna'l-munāfiqīna yukhādiʿūna'llāha wa Huwa Khādiʿuhum]*. (4:142)

[368] Since the final -*n* is not a root consonant, the word assumes the form *al-Muʿādī* when the definite article is prefixed to it.

[369] See discussion of this epithet on p. 289 above.

APPENDICES

From the Book of Good Manners *[Kitāb al-Ādāb]*

On when it is appropriate to show respect by standing up.
On what to say when sneezing, and to someone who sneezes.
On how to cope with yawning.

It is considered commendable to stand up [as a mark of respect] for the just leader *[al-imām al-ʿādil]*, for one's parents, for people who are devoted to religion and piety *[ahl ad-dīn wa'l-waraʿ]*, and for the most honorable of human beings. This principle is based on the following traditions:

It is reported that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) sent for Saʿd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) in connection with the affair of the people of Quraiẓa. When he came, riding on a white donkey, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: "Stand up, all of you, in honor of your chief *[sayyid]*!"

According to a report from ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with her), she said:

"Whenever the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) went in to see [his daughter] Fāṭima (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with her), she would rise in his honor. Then she would take his hand and kiss it, and make him sit in her own seat. And whenever she entered the presence of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), he would stand up in her honor, take her hand and kiss it, and make her sit in his own place."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> When a distinguished member of a community pays you a visit, you must treat him as an honored guest.

This practice is also commendable because it sows the seeds of love and affection in people's hearts. It is therefore appropriate to observe it with good and righteous people *[ahl al-khair wa'ṣ-ṣalāḥ]*, just as it is desirable to exchange gifts with them. With sinful and immoral types *[ahl al-ma'āṣī wa'l-fujūr]*, on the other hand, it is regarded as reprehensible.

It is also part of good manners for a person who sneezes to cover his face and suppress the noise he makes; then he should praise Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), raising his voice as he says:

Praise be to Allāh,	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*
Lord of All the Worlds!	*Rabbi'l-'ālamīn*.

This practice is based on what has been handed down in certain traditional reports *[akhbār]*, according to which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> When the servant says: "*al-hamdu li'llāhi* [Praise be to Allāh!]," the angel says: "*Rabbi'l-'ālamīn* [Lord of All the Worlds]," and if he says: "*Rabbi'l-'ālamīn*" after "*al-hamdu li'llāhi*," the angel will say: "*yarḥamuka Rabbuka* [May your Lord have mercy on you!]."

He should not turn his face about to right and left, and when he says these words it is commendable for anyone who hears him to sympathize with him by saying:

May Allāh have mercy upon you!	*yarḥamuka'llāh*.

To this the sneezer should respond by saying:

May Allāh guide you aright and improve your condition!	*yahdīkumu'llāhu* *wa yuṣliḥu bālakum*.

It is a permissible alternative for the sympathizer to say [instead of *yarḥamuka'llāh]*:

May Allāh forgive you!	*yaghfiru'llāhu lakum*.

If the sneezer sneezes more than three times, however, the obligation to offer the sympathetic prayer *[tashmīt]* ceases to be incumbent [on the hearer], because the sneezing must then be due to his having caught a common cold *[zukām]*. There is support for this view in the traditional sources *[fi'l-athar]*, since we have it on the authority of Salama ibn al-Awka' (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him) that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> A sympathetic prayer should be offered for the sneezer up to three times, but if he sneezes more often than that he must be suffering from a common cold *[mazkūm]*."

When a person yawns, he should cover his mouth with his hand or with his sleeve. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> If one of you happens to yawn, let him take control of his mouth, for the devil *[shaiṭān]* uses yawning as an opportunity to get inside.

According to Abū Huraira (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Allāh (Exalted is He) does like sneezing *['uṭās]*, but He dislikes yawning *[tathā'ub]*, so if one of you feels a yawn coming on, let him suppress it to the best of his ability. He should not say: 'Hah, hah!', for that comes from the devil laughing at him.

It is permissible for a man to offer a sympathetic prayer *[tashmīt]* for a woman who is too old to be shy, but it is improper in the case of a bashful young girl. Where a boy is concerned, sympathy for him should be offered by using one of the following expressions:

May you be blessed!	*būrika fīk.*
May Allāh (Exalted is He) reward you!	*jazāka'llāhu (ta'ālā).*
May Allāh (Exalted is He) prefer you!	*khayyaraka'llāhu (ta'ālā).*

* * *

Murshid:	Director, Guide; One who shows His servants the right path.
Qāḍin:[357]	Judge; One who preordains the fate *[qāḍāʾ]* of His creatures.
Ḥākim:	Ruler, Governor. (As we have already mentioned elsewhere in this work.[358])
Wāʿid:	Promising; One who promises to reward His servants for obedient conduct.
Mutawaʿʿid:	Threatening, Menacing; One who threatens to punish His servants for disobedient conduct.
Mukhawwif:	Fear-inspiring; One who puts His servants in fear of disobeying Him.
Muḥadhdhir:	Cautioning; One who warns His servants to beware of disobeying Him.[359]
Dhāmm:	Blaming, Dispraising; One who gives blame where blame is due.
Mādiḥ:	Praising, Commending; One who gives praise where praise is due.
Mukhāṭib:	Conversing, Discoursing; One who may address a servant of His in intelligible speech.
Mutakallim:	Speaker; One who uses the spoken word.
Qāʾil:	Sayer; One who utters sayings in language intelligible to His human creatures.

All of these *[Mukhāṭib, Mutakallim* and *Qāʾil]* can be traced back to the same concept, namely that the faculty of speech *[kalām]* is rightly attributed to Him.

Muʿdim:	Annihilating; One who can cause things to cease to exist. [In some contexts, however, the same word means "deprived, destitute, reduced to nought, unmade." This passive meaning is relevant to the first sentence in the following paragraph.]

It is permissible to characterize Him as *Muʿdim* in the sense that He has not been caused to exist *[lam yūjad]* and has not been made *[lam yufʿal]*. The same epithet is also appropriate in the sense that He is One

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[357] Since the final -*n* is not a root consonant, the word assumes the form *al-Qāḍī* when the definite article is prefixed to it.

[358] See p. 172 above.

[359] The verb *yuḥadhdhiru*, of which *muḥadhdhir* is the corresponding active participle, occurs twice in the Qurʾān:

> Allāh warns you to beware *[yuḥadhdhirukum]* of Himself. (3:28 and 30)

As for shaving it off with a razor *[mūsā]*, this is disapproved of, because it has been reported on the authority of ʿAbdu'llāh the son of ʿUmar (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with them both) that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> He who shaves off his mustache is not one of us.

A further explanation may be found in the fact that this procedure involves a form of self-inflicted agony *[muthla]*, and that it spoils the dignified appearance and beauty of the face, whereas there is some refinement and beauty when the roots of the hair survive. It is also reported of the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with them all) that they used shears to cut their mustaches.

As for allowing the beard to grow *[iʿfā' al-liḥya]*, this means letting it flourish and multiply. Consider the words of Allāh (Exalted is He): "until they grew *[ḥattā ʿafaw]*" (7:95); that is to say: "until they multiplied."[3]

It has been reported that Abū Huraira (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him) used to grasp hold of his beard, then he would shear off the part that stuck out beyond his grasp. ʿUmar (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him) also used to say: "Take off any part that sticks out beneath your grasp."

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[3] The point being made here is a linguistic one, namely that the words *iʿfā'* and *ʿafaw* share the same root: ʿ–*f*–*w*. The Qur'ānic verse is not directly concerned with beards; it begins (Yūsuf ʿAlī translation):

> Then We changed their suffering into prosperity, until they grew and multiplied.

doctrine concerning what beliefs may validly be held about the Maker *[al-Bārī']* and what beliefs may not be validly held about Him. This is a case where only the learned scholars are qualified to express criticism *[inkār]* of the person concerned. Nevertheless, if one of the scholars provides an individual among the ordinary people with enough information on the subject, it becomes permissible for the latter to criticize the error. The layman *['āmmī]* does have an obligation to condemn what is wrong, but only when he is in a position to do so effectively, as we have just explained, and it is not permissible for him to act before achieving this state of readiness.

Let us now consider the situation that arises when there is a lack of unanimity among the Islamic jurists *[fuqahā']* on the point in question, and when it is legitimate to exercise independent judgment *[ijtihād]* on the matter. Take, for example, the case of an ordinary person who drinks the beverage called *nabīdh*,[151] simply following without question *[muqallidan]* the legal doctrine of Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him); or that of a woman who gets married without the offices of a marriage guardian *[walī]*, following the normal practice according to that same school of law.

In cases like these, a person whose own loyalty is to the school *[madhhab]* of Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal], or to that of ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them both), has no right to condemn the behavior of those [who have chosen to follow the Ḥanafī school]. As Imām Aḥmad himself said, according to the account of his doctrine reported by al-Marwazī: "It is not appropriate for the jurist *[faqīh]* to try to convert other people to his own school of legal thought, nor should he treat them harshly."

[151] The beverage called *nabīdh* is a kind of wine made from dates or raisins. Since it ferments and becomes intoxicating at a certain stage, most of the Islamic jurists came to the conclusion that it should be outlawed altogether, to be on the safe side. Only the Ḥanafī school continued to allow the moderate consumption of *nabīdh*, citing numerous traditions *[aḥādīth]* in support of their doctrine.

According to the most notable of these traditions, as recorded by Ibn Māja, 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: "We used to prepare *nabīdh* for Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), using a skin for the purpose. We would take a handful of dates or a handful of raisins, cast them into the skin and pour water over them. The *nabīdh* we prepared in this way in the morning, would be drunk by him in the evening; and when we prepared it in the evening, he would drink it the following morning."

According to another tradition on the subject, Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) said that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to drink *nabīdh* as late as the third day after its preparation, but what was left after that would be poured away.

To the same effect, moreover, is the report transmitted on the authority of Manṣūr ibn Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him), according to whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had his shaving done by Abū Bakr (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him) and took care of his pubic region with his own hand.

We have a contradictory statement, however, from Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him) who said:

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never used a depilatory. When the hair on his body became profuse, he would always shave it off."

Provided the matter is nevertheless settled, it can be considered permissible for a person to get someone else to attend to this [removal of body hair] for him, if he cannot conveniently manage it himself, except when it comes to the pubic region of the thigh and the upper leg, which he must take care of personally.

The source for this is the traditional report from [the Prophet's wife] Umm Salama (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with her) who said that when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) reached his pubic region *['āna]* he would apply depilatory to it by himself. (In one version, the wording is: "when he reached his *marāqq*.")[6]

Such is the doctrine adopted by Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him). Abu'l-'Abbās an-Nasā'ī said: "We applied depilatory to Abū 'Abdi'llāh [Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal], but when it came to his pubic region he would apply the paste himself."

If the matter is settled, then, and it is established as permissible to remove these hairs from the pubic region, and from the thighs and the upper legs, by the application of depilatory paste, it must also be permissible to use a razor for the same purpose, because it is sharper and more effective than the depilatory. This argument by analogy *[qiyās]* is supported by that tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him):

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never used a depilatory. When the hair on his body became profuse, he would always shave it off."

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[6] The *marāqq* are the areas below the navel where the skin is soft and delicate.

It cannot be maintained that shaving [*ḥalq*] and depilation [*tanwīr*] are mentioned in the traditional sources only with specific reference to the pubic region, in view of the *ḥadīth* of Umm Salama (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with her), which we have already quoted. She said: "When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) reached his pubic region [*ʿāna*], he would apply depilatory to it by himself."

This proves that he used to entrust others with the job of removing his hair, apart from that of his pubic region [*ʿāna*], which means only the thigh and the upper leg.

If any tradition can be cited in support of prohibiting [the removal of body hair], it must refer to those who practice it for the purpose of making themselves attractive to other men, such as homosexuals, effeminate transvestites and the like.

Allāh (Exalted is He) is More Aware of what is correct!

On the disapproval of plucking gray or white hair.

The plucking of gray or white hair *[shaib]* is frowned upon, because of the report handed down by ʿAmr ibn Shuʿaib from his father and his grandfather before him (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with them all). He said: "The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) forbade the plucking of gray hair, and he called it the Light of Islām."

In another version, the wording is: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: 'Do not pluck gray hair! Not one Muslim will have his hair turn gray in Islām, without it being a light for him on the Day of Resurrection.'"

In Yaḥyā's version of this same tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the last phrase reads: "'without Allāh (Exalted is He) recording a good deed in his favor and subtracting a sin from his account.'"

It has also been stated in some of the Qur'ānic Commentaries *[tafāsīr]*, in explanation of the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He): "And the warner has come to you" (35:37), that this refers to gray hair. So how can it be permissible to get rid of that which gives warning of death and serves as a reminder of it, which forbids the desires and pleasures of the flesh and puts a stop to them, which acts as a spur to making ready and preparing for the hereafter and constructing the abode of perpetuity? Anyone who does so must be holding out against destiny *[qadar]*, objecting to what Allāh (Exalted is He) is doing to him, unwilling to accept His judgment *[qaḍā']* (Almighty and Glorious is He). Preferring youthfulness and freshness and wanting to remain forever young, he must be reluctant to adopt a sedate and dignified bearing, to clothe himself in the light of Islām, and to assume the character of Abraham, the Intimate Friend of the All-Merciful *[Ibrāhīm Khalīl ar-Raḥmān]*, because it is related in some of the books that the first to turn gray-haired in Islām was the Prophet Abraham (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is also reported as having said: "Allāh will shrink from the person with gray or white hair," meaning: "[He will shrink] from punishing him."

On the desirability of clipping the nails on a Friday.

It is considered commendable to clip one's nails on a Friday *[Yaum al-Jum'a*; the Day of Congregational Prayer], and to do them in an irregular sequence, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If a person cuts his nails in an odd sequence, his eyes will not become inflamed with ophthalmia *[ramad]*.

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* transmitted by Umaid ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān from his father, [the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said]:

> If a person cuts his nails on a Friday, a healing influence will enter into him and a sickness will depart from him.

This special benefit and the desirability of the practice have also been assigned, in some traditional reports, to Thursday after the afternoon prayer *['aṣr]*.

What is meant by following an odd sequence is that one should begin with the little finger *[khinṣir]* of the right hand, then take the middle finger *[wusṭā]*, then the thumb *[ibhām]*, then the ring finger *[binṣir]* and then the index finger *[sabbāba]*. In the case of the left hand, one should start with the thumb, then take the middle finger, then the little finger, then the index finger and finally the ring finger. Such is the interpretation provided by 'Abdu'llāh ibn Baṭṭa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), on the authority of our masters [in the Ḥanbalī school].

As reported by Wakī', 'Ā'isha (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with her) said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to me: 'O 'Ā'isha, when you clip your nails, you must start with the middle finger, then take the little finger, then the thumb, then the ring finger and then the index finger, for this will give rise to affluence.'"

The correct way to trim the nails is with scissors or a knife. Doing it with the teeth is viewed with disfavor.

When a person is clipping his nails, it is also recommended that he wash the *barājim* [wrinkled joints at the back of the fingers, where dirt tends to collect], and that he bury the nail clippings in the ground.

This last point applies also to hair from the head and the body, as well as to blood drawn by cupping *[ḥijāma]* and phlebotomy *[faṣd]*, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having ordered the burial of blood, hair and nail clippings.

◆

On shaving the head when not on Pilgrimage.

As for shaving the head when one is not performing the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* or the Visitation *[ʿUmra]*, and when there is no urgent necessity, it is disapproved of according to one of the two lines transmitted from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) by way of Imām Aḥmad (may Allāh be well pleased with him), since it is related in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Abū Mūsā and ʿUbaid ibn ʿUmair (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with them both) that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: "He who shaves is not one of us."

In [his work entitled] *al-Ifrād*, ad-Dāraquṭnī[7] reports, on the authority of Jābir the son of ʿAbdu'llāh (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with them both), that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> The forelocks should not be removed, except during the *Ḥajj* and the *ʿUmra*.

Furthermore, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was critical of the Khawārij,[8] and he referred to the fact that they shaved their heads as if this was their characteristic feature *[sīmā]*.

ʿUmar (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him) once said to Ṣubaigh: "If I ever found you shaved, I would beat the person you had your eyes on."

The son of ʿAbbās (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with them both) is reported as having said: "He who shaves in the big city *[miṣr]* deserves to go to the devil."

Besides, this contains an element of imitation of the barbarians *[aʿājim]*, and the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said: "If a person imitates a group of people, he is one of them."

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[7] ʿAlī ad-Dāraquṭnī (d. A.H. 385/995 C.E.) is famous for having proved the weakness of two hundred of the traditions included in the collections of Imām al-Bukhārī and Imām Muslim.

[8] Schismatics with extremist tendencies.

If the reprehensible character *[karāhiyya]* of the practice we have mentioned is indeed established, the proper alternative to it must be to trim the hair with shears *[jalam]*, which means the same as scissors *[miqaṣṣ]*, as Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him) was in the habit of doing. If someone so wishes, he may go further than this and clip his hair from close to the roots, or, if he prefers, he may simply take off the ends.

According to the other line of tradition *[riwāya]*, however, this practice [of shaving] is not in fact disapproved of, because Abū Dāwūd provides a report,[9] with a chain of transmitting authorities *[isnād]*, according to which ʿAbdu'llāh the son of ʿUmar (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with them both) said:

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once sent Bilāl to tell the family of Jaʿfar to come to him, and then, when they came to him, he said: 'Do not weep over my brother after today.' Then he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'Summon my brother's sons into my presence!' So we were brought forward as if we were chickens, and he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'Summon the barber *[ḥallāq]* into my presence!' Then he ordered him to shave our heads."

It has also been reported that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) did shave his head during the latter part of his life, after he had previously worn his hair at shoulder length, and according to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of ʿAlī (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him): "The hair of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to reach down to the lobes of his ears."

Besides, people have made a practice of shaving all down through the ages, with no suggestion that there was anything wrong with it.

In this [tolerant view of shaving] there is also the element of exemption from hardship and inconvenience, comparable to the way in which food that has been touched by a cat, or by insects and pests, is exempted [from the prohibition against eating food touched by other creatures, such as dogs].

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[9] Abū Dāwūd as-Sajistānī (d. A.H. 275/888 C.E.) is the compiler of one of the 'Six Books' *[al-Kutub as-Sitta]*, the most authoritative collections of tradition.

When a person yawns, he should cover his mouth with his hand or with his sleeve. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> If one of you happens to yawn, let him take control of his mouth, for the devil *[shaiṭān]* uses yawning as an opportunity to get inside.

According to Abū Huraira (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Allāh (Exalted is He) does like sneezing *['uṭās]*, but He dislikes yawning *[tathā'ub]*, so if one of you feels a yawn coming on, let him suppress it to the best of his ability. He should not say: 'Hah, hah!', for that comes from the devil laughing at him.

It is permissible for a man to offer a sympathetic prayer *[tashmīt]* for a woman who is too old to be shy, but it is improper in the case of a bashful young girl. Where a boy is concerned, sympathy for him should be offered by using one of the following expressions:

May you be blessed!	*būrika fīk*.
May Allāh (Exalted is He) reward you!	*jazāka'llāhu (ta'ālā)*.
May Allāh (Exalted is He) prefer you!	*khayyaraka'llāhu (ta'ālā)*.

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On the cultivation of sideburns by men; on the removal of facial hair with tweezers.

It is considered reprehensible for men—although it is not improper for women—to practice the cultivation of sideburns *[taḥdhīf]*, which means letting the hair between the cheek and the temples grow long, as is now the custom of the ʿAlawiyyūn.[10]

We know that ʿAlī himself (may Allāh the Exalted ennoble his countenance) disapproved of it, because of the report handed down from him, with full chain of transmission *[isnād]*, by Abū Bakr al-Khallāl, one of our masters [of the Ḥanbalī school].[11]

Al-Walīd ibn Muslim is reported as having said: "I got to know those people really well, and this was not part of their custom."

As for removing hair from the face by means of tweezers *[minqāsh]*, this is considered reprehensible for both men and women, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) cursed those women who practice the method of depilation called *tanammuṣ*, which means plucking hair from the face with tweezers. This was mentioned by Abū ʿUbaida.

Where a woman is concerned, it is regarded as improper for her to use glass *[zujāj]* or a razor *[mūsā]* to depilate her forehead, or to remove her facial hair, because of the prohibition of this already mentioned.

It has been maintained, however, that this is in fact permissible for her, though only in the specific case where she does it to please her own husband, because he expects it of her and she has reason to be afraid that, if she fails to do it, he is likely to abandon her and marry another woman. Since this would have unfortunate and painful consequences for her, she may be permitted to practice that kind of depilation on the grounds of beneficial advantage *[maṣlaḥa]*, just as it is considered permissible for her to enhance her charm by wearing various kinds of clothing, to make herself fragrant with all sorts of perfumes, to show eager desire for her husband, and to sport and have fun with him.

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[10] The ʿAlawiyyūn claim to be descendants of Imām ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[11] Abū Bakr al-Khallāl (d. A.H. 311/923–4 C.E.) was responsible for compiling and systematizing the legal teachings of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may the mercy of Allāh be upon him).

According to this view of the matter, the curse uttered by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) against women who practice facial depilation *[mutanammiṣāt]* must be interpreted as applicable only to those whose purpose is to entice men other than their husbands into immoral behavior with them, to attract them and offer themselves for unlawful sexual intercourse *[zinā]*.

Allāh is More Aware *[Allāhu A'lam]* [of the truth of these matters].

On dyeing the hair black.

It is considered reprehensible to tint [one's hair] with black dye, because according to al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with him) the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said, concerning people who change the white to black: "Allāh (Exalted is He) will blacken their countenances on the Day of Resurrection," and according to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him and with his father) the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said about such people: "They will not smell the fragrance of the Garden [of Paradise]."

As for [those apparently contradictory] traditional reports *[akhbār]* that have been handed down on the subject of tinting with black dye, such as the one according to which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: "Use black dye on your hair, for it is a treat to please the wife and a trick to deceive the enemy," the implication here is that the object should be to succeed in combat, and the reference to the wife is incidental, not the main thrust.

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As for those attributes which it is permissible to ascribe to Him (Almighty and Glorious is He), they include happiness *[faraḥ]*, laughter *[ḍaḥk]*, anger *[ghaḍab]*, displeasure *[sakhaṭ]* and contentment *[riḍā]*. (We have already mentioned this at the beginning of the chapter.)

It must be permissible to refer to Him as "[there to be] Found" *[Maujūd]*,[340] since He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> And as for those who disbelieve, their works are as a mirage in a spacious plain. The thirsty man supposes it to be water, till he comes to it and finds it is nothing, and instead of it he finds Allāh *[wajada'llāha 'indahu]*. (24:39)

It must also be permissible to refer to Him as "a Thing" *[Shai']*, in view of His own words (Exalted is He):

> Say: "What thing *[ayyu shai'in]* is greatest in testimony?" Say: "Allāh." (6:19)

He may properly be referred to as "a Person" or "an Individual" *[Nafs* or *Dhāt* or *'Ain]*, [341] without any anthropomorphic comparison being implied, as we have previously explained.

He may be referred to as "Being" *[Kā'in]*,[342] without specific definition, in view of His own words (Exalted is He):

> And **Allāh** is Aware of all things ***[kāna'llāhu bi kulli shai'in 'Alīmā]***. (33:40)

> And **Allāh** is Watchful over all things ***[kāna'llāhu bi kulli shai'in Raqībā]***. (33:52)

It is permissible to characterize Him as all of the following:[343]

Qadīm:	Ancient [without beginning], Infinitely Pre-Existent, Sempiternal.[344]
Bāqin:[345]	Everlasting, Eternal.

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[340] As the passive participle of the verb *wajada*, the word *maujūd* means simply "found." By extension, it then comes to signify: (1) There to be found, available, on hand, existing, existent. (2) Actually present. (3) A living being.

[341] As used in non-specific contexts, these three Arabic words are virtual synonyms, and, like "a person" or "an individual" in corresponding English usage, they mean little more than "someone."

[342] The Arabic word *kā'in* is the participle of the verb "to be" *[kāna]*, so it could also be translated as "one who is." Here, as in many instances in this section of his work, the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is making a point which defies straightforward translation into English, since it is so inextricably bound up with the subtleties of Arabic word and sentence formation.

[343] As in the case of the impermissible epithets listed previously (see pp. 281–84 above), many of these Arabic terms have a wide range of possible meanings and nuances. In this case, however, the translator has confined himself to supplying only the more directly relevant English equivalents, since the author himself (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has provided quite extensive notes of explanation in most instances.

[344] As an ordinary adjective, *qadīm* means "old; ancient"—as in *māl qadīm* [old, or long-possessed, property.] As an epithet applied to Allāh, *al-Qadīm* is often reinforced by the addition of *al-Azalī* [Existing from all eternity].

[345] Since the final -n is not a root consonant, the word assumes the form *al-Bāqī* when the definite article is prefixed to it.

On the disapproval of plucking gray or white hair.

The plucking of gray or white hair *[shaib]* is frowned upon, because of the report handed down by ʿAmr ibn Shuʿaib from his father and his grandfather before him (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with them all). He said: "The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) forbade the plucking of gray hair, and he called it the Light of Islām."

In another version, the wording is: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: 'Do not pluck gray hair! Not one Muslim will have his hair turn gray in Islām, without it being a light for him on the Day of Resurrection.'"

In Yaḥyā's version of this same tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the last phrase reads: "'without Allāh (Exalted is He) recording a good deed in his favor and subtracting a sin from his account.'"

It has also been stated in some of the Qurʾānic Commentaries *[tafāsīr]*, in explanation of the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He): "And the warner has come to you" (35:37), that this refers to gray hair. So how can it be permissible to get rid of that which gives warning of death and serves as a reminder of it, which forbids the desires and pleasures of the flesh and puts a stop to them, which acts as a spur to making ready and preparing for the hereafter and constructing the abode of perpetuity? Anyone who does so must be holding out against destiny *[qadar]*, objecting to what Allāh (Exalted is He) is doing to him, unwilling to accept His judgment *[qaḍāʾ]* (Almighty and Glorious is He). Preferring youthfulness and freshness and wanting to remain forever young, he must be reluctant to adopt a sedate and dignified bearing, to clothe himself in the light of Islām, and to assume the character of Abraham, the Intimate Friend of the All-Merciful *[Ibrāhīm Khalīl ar-Raḥmān]*, because it is related in some of the books that the first

Murshid: Director, Guide; One who shows His servants the right path.

Qāḍin:[357] Judge; One who preordains the fate *[qāḍā']* of His creatures.

Ḥākim: Ruler, Governor. (As we have already mentioned elsewhere in this work.[358])

Wā'id: Promising; One who promises to reward His servants for obedient conduct.

Mutawa''id: Threatening, Menacing; One who threatens to punish His servants for disobedient conduct.

Mukhawwif: Fear-inspiring; One who puts His servants in fear of disobeying Him.

Muḥadhdhir: Cautioning; One who warns His servants to beware of disobeying Him.[359]

Dhāmm: Blaming, Dispraising; One who gives blame where blame is due.

Mādiḥ: Praising, Commending; One who gives praise where praise is due.

Mukhāṭib: Conversing, Discoursing; One who may address a servant of His in intelligible speech.

Mutakallim: Speaker; One who uses the spoken word.

Qā'il: Sayer; One who utters sayings in language intelligible to His human creatures.

All of these *[Mukhāṭib, Mutakallim* and *Qā'il]* can be traced back to the same concept, namely that the faculty of speech *[kalām]* is rightly attributed to Him.

Mu'dim: Annihilating; One who can cause things to cease to exist. [In some contexts, however, the same word means "deprived, destitute, reduced to nought, unmade." This passive meaning is relevant to the first sentence in the following paragraph.]

It is permissible to characterize Him as *Mu'dim* in the sense that He has not been caused to exist *[lam yūjad]* and has not been made *[lam yuf'al]*. The same epithet is also appropriate in the sense that He is One

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[357] Since the final -*n* is not a root consonant, the word assumes the form *al-Qāḍī* when the definite article is prefixed to it.

[358] See p. 172 above.

[359] The verb *yuḥadhdhiru*, of which *muḥadhdhir* is the corresponding active participle, occurs twice in the Qur'ān:

> Allāh warns you to beware *[yuḥadhdhirukum]* of Himself. (3:28 and 30)

On applying oil to one's hair periodically.

Oil should be applied [to the hair] at intervals [*ghibban*], which means that one should do this one day and refrain from doing it the next day. This practice is based on the report by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), according to whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) declared that a man should not anoint and comb his hair unless it be less frequently than every day.

The ideal choice for this purpose is the oil of the violet [*banafsaj*] above all other oils, because of the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) reported by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> The excellence of the oil of the violet, above all other oils, is like my own excellence above all other human beings.

◆

On seven things a person should never be without.

It is recommended that no one, whether he be on a journey or at home, should ever let himself run short of seven things, in addition to dutiful devotion *[taqwā]* to Allāh (Exalted is He) and confident trust *[thiqa]* in Him, namely the following:

1. The means to keep himself clean *[tanẓīf]* and to improve his appearance *[tazyīn]*;
2. A jar of kohl *[mukḥula]*;
3. A comb *[mushṭ]*;
4. A toothbrush *[siwāk]*;[13]
5. A pair of scissors *[miqaṣṣ]*;
6. A scratcher *[midra']*, meaning a piece of wood that is rounded at the point, shorter than a span, which the Arabs and the Ṣūfīs like to carry in order to rid themselves of nuisances, such as lice and other pests. They use it to scratch their bodies, and so they can kill insects without having to touch anything directly with their hands.
7. A flask of oil *[qārūrat ad-duhn]*.

This recommendation is based on the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), according to whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was never without this [set of seven things], whether at home or on a journey.

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[13] The *siwāk* is a small stick, softened at the tip by chewing or beating to form a kind of toothbrush.

On the etiquette of eating and drinking.

For a person who is taking food, the recommended practice is to invoke the Name of Allāh (Exalted is He) when he is about to eat, and to praise Him when he has finished eating. The same applies to drinking.[14]

The reason for this practice is that it serves to bring greater blessedness to one's food, and to keep one's devil *[shaiṭān]* at a distance.

It is based on the traditional report of how the Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to him: "O Messenger of Allāh, we eat, but we do not feel satisfied!" To this Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied: "Well, maybe you go your separate ways [at meal times]?" "Yes, we do," they told him, so he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "Well then, you must get together to take your food, and invoke the Name of Allāh (Exalted is He), so that He may bless it for you."

According to another report, Jābir ibn ʿAbdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once heard the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> When a man enters his house, if he invokes the Name of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) at the moment he makes his entry, and then again when he takes his meal, the devil will say to its children: 'There is no overnight lodging for you here, and no supper!' But if he comes in without invoking the Name of Allāh as he enters, the devil will say: 'You have gained a place to spend the night!' Then, if he also fails to invoke the Name of Allāh when he takes his meal, it will say: 'You have gained a lodging for the night, and supper as well!'

Ḥudhaifa (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "Whenever we were gathered for a meal in the company of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), not one of us would put his hand out [toward the food] until Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had done so first.

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[14] In other words, immediately before eating or drinking one should say: "*Bismi'llāh* [In the Name of Allāh]! And after eating or drinking one should say: "*al-hamdu li'llāh* [Praise be to Allāh]!"

"On one occasion when we were present with him for a meal, along came an Arab tribesman, who seemed to be driven by something. He went straight for the food, but Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) grabbed his outstretched hand. Then a young woman turned up, also seeming to be driven by something. She went straight for the food, but Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) grabbed her outstretched hand and said:

"'The devil makes free with food over which the Name of Allāh has not been invoked. He came with this Arab tribesman here, to take advantage of him, so I grabbed his hand. He also came with this young woman, to take advantage of her, so I grabbed her hand too. So, by Him in whose Hand is my own self, his [the devil's] hand is in my hand together with the hands of this pair!'"

If a person forgets to invoke the Name of Allāh (Exalted is He) at the beginning of a meal, he should say:

"In the Name of Allāh" be the first of it and the last of it.	*Bismi'llāhi awwaluhu wa ākhiruhu.*

Thus it has been handed down from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

It is also considered commendable to take salt both at the beginning of a meal and at the end.

One should pick up a morsel of food with the right hand and make it smaller, then chew it well and swallow it slowly.

[When eating from a large platter] a person should take his food from the part that is close to him, if it is all of the same kind. If it consists of various kinds, however, it is quite all right for him to move his hand around the tray. The same applies if it consists of fruits and sweetmeats. He should not eat from the top or the middle of the [pile of] food, but from the sides. If he is eating alone, he should use three fingers [to handle his food] and he may lick them.

One should not blow on food or drink, nor inhale and exhale inside the container. If a person has trouble with his breathing, he should hold the cup or glass away from his mouth, then bring it close again after he has caught his breath.

It is considered improper to adopt a reclining posture while eating and drinking. It is permissible to eat and drink while standing, although some maintain that this is frowned upon. Sitting down to eat is more highly recommended.

When passing the bowl to one of your fellow diners, you should start with the person sitting on your right.

It is not permissible to take food and drink in vessels of gold or silver, nor in a cracked vessel if it has been repaired extensively with strips of precious metal. If someone has food served to him in anything of the kind, he should therefore take it out of the vessel and transfer it to a piece of bread, or to a different sort of container, and then eat it. It is also his duty to make his disapproval known to the person providing the food.

The same rule applies to censers and instruments of fumigation made of gold or silver, as well as to rose water from sprinkling cans made of these metals. It is unlawful for a person to be present in the area where they have been used, so he is obliged to express his disapproval and to get up and leave the company seated there. He should offer his criticism in a friendly manner, by saying:

"For your happiness to be complete, you must embellish yourselves by means of that which the sacred law *[sharīʿa]* has permitted and made lawful, not that which it has declared unlawful and forbidden. There is no good in pleasure that leads to sinful disobedience. Remember—may Allāh have mercy upon you—the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> 'If someone drinks from a vessel of gold or silver, or a vessel with some of this in it, what rumbles in his belly will be nothing but the Fire of Hell.'"

Once a person has placed a morsel of food inside his mouth, he should not take it out again, unless he is forced to do so by a fit of choking, or because it is so hot that it might cause him serious harm. If he has to sneeze, he should cover his face and take great care to shield it for the sake of the food.

If a seated diner has a person standing over him, he should invite him to take a seat. Then, if the person declines his invitation, or if his own slave or servant is standing ready to attend to his needs and to keep him supplied with water, he should select some choice morsels and feed him from time to time.

It is considered commendable to wipe the vessel clean of any food that has spilled over, and to pick up the crumbs from the sides of the vessel and the tray.

It is also commendable to put one's brethren at their ease with good conversation and stories appropriate to the occasion, if they are feeling unrelaxed.

It is proper to observe good manners when dining with worldly types; with the poor, to show generous favor; with one's brethren, to be happily at ease; and in the company of the scholars, to learn and take instruction. When eating with someone who is blind, one should let him know what is in front of him, because he might otherwise miss some tasty morsels on account of his blindness.

It is considered commendable to accept an invitation to a wedding banquet *[walīmat al-ʿurs]*. When a person does so, he may eat if he wishes, otherwise he may offer a prayer and take his leave, since we have it on the authority of Jābir ibn ʿAbdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone is invited [to a wedding feast], he must accept. Then if he wishes he may take some food, and if he wishes he may abstain.

According to ʿUmar's son ʿAbdu'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> If someone is invited and does not accept, he will have disobeyed Allāh (Exalted is He) and His Messenger. And if someone enters without an invitation, he will go in as a thief and leave as a reprobate.

The rule we have just mentioned applies when this [occasion of the wedding banquet] is free of anything reprehensible *[munkar]*. If some abomination is present, however, such as the drum *[ṭabl]*, the oboe *[mizmār]*, the lute *[ʿūd]*, the bamboo flute *[nāy]*, the *sharbūq*, the reed flute *[shabbaba]*, the rebec *[rabāba]*, song recitals *[maghānī]*, mandolins *[ṭanābīr]* and the rattle[15] played by the Turks, in that case one must not join the company, because all this stuff is unlawful. As for the

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[15] The printed text has *j-rāth*, which does not seem to be listed in any major dictionary, whether Arabic, Turkish or Persian. The shape of the word (in the Arabic script) suggests that it may be a corrupt rendering of the Turkish *chaghāna*, meaning "a rattle composed of discs of metal mounted on a wire, used by dancers in beating time." (See: Sir James W. Redhouse. *[Ottoman] Turkish and English Lexicon*. Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1974.)

On applying oil to one's hair periodically.

Oil should be applied [to the hair] at intervals *[ghibban]*, which means that one should do this one day and refrain from doing it the next day. This practice is based on the report by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), according to whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) declared that a man should not anoint and comb his hair unless it be less frequently than every day.

The ideal choice for this purpose is the oil of the violet *[banafsaj]* above all other oils, because of the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) reported by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> The excellence of the oil of the violet, above all other oils, is like my own excellence above all other human beings.

◆

It is unlawful to gate-crash *[taṭafful]* other people's dinner parties; in other words, to join a meal along with someone who has been invited, without having received a personal invitation. This constitutes a kind of shameless intrusion *[waqāḥa]* and extortion *[ghaṣb]*, since it involves two sinful offenses: One of these is the act of eating a meal to which one has not been invited, while the second is the act of entering the home of another person without his permission, invading his privacy and causing discomfort to his guests.

One element of good manners is not to keep looking at the faces of people as they are dining, because this is liable to make them feel embarrassed. You should also refrain from talking during the meal about things that people could regard as distasteful, as well as about things that could make them laugh, for fear of causing them to choke on their food, and about things that could make them feel sad, in order to avoid spoiling the appetite of your fellow diners.

It is considered commendable to wash one's [right] hand both before and after eating a meal, although there are some who maintain that this is disapproved of prior to the meal and recommended after it is over.

It is considered reprehensible to eat malodorous vegetables, namely the garlic plant, the onion and the leek, because of the obnoxious character of their aroma. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If anyone eats these malodorous vegetables, he must not come near our place of prayer *[muṣallā]*.

Overeating, to the point where it is liable to cause indigestion *[tukhma]*, is subject to disapproval. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> The son of Adam can fill no receptacle worse than his own belly.

It is also considered reprehensible for any of the guests at a meal, apart from the host himself, to feed morsels to others present at the table, except with the host's permission. The reason for this is that the guest is dining on the property of the owner of the food, by virtue of a form of license *[ibāḥa]*, not on the strength of a transfer of ownership *[tamlīk]*.

This is why the experts are in disagreement as to the exact moment at which the food does in fact become the property of the person eating

Provided this point has been established, it can be stated that the duty to express condemnation arises only in cases involving the infraction of a rule on which the jurists have reached a consensus *[ijmāʿ]*, and not in cases where legal opinions differ.

It should be noted, however, that some accounts of the doctrine of Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) would seem to indicate the permissibility of expressing condemnation even of a practice about which there is disagreement. This is confirmed by something he once said, according to the version reported by al-Maimūnī, to the effect that a man who comes across a group of people, and sees that they are playing chess *[shaṭranj]*, should tell them that what they are doing is forbidden, and should rebuke them sternly. It is well known, of course, that this [game of chess] is permissible according to legal doctrine of the colleagues of ash-Shāfiʿī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them).

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done by a person who is eating alone, or by the host at a shared meal.

The guest should be content to accept any food set before him, rather than imposing his own preferences on the host, because this would oblige the latter to behave in an awkwardly formal manner, and the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> I and the dutifully devoted members of my Community are free from awkward formality *[anā wa atqiyā'u ummatī barā'un mina't-takalluf]*.

Of course, if the host actually invites him to say what kinds of food he likes best, the guest is entitled to state his preference.

It is considered reprehensible to refuse to accept a gift, even if it does not amount to much, as long as it comes from a good and lawful source. The recipient should try to find something to give in return, or offer a prayer *[du'ā']* for the sake of the giver.

If something drops into a person's food or drink, the consequences depend on whether or not it has a tendency to melt or dissolve, for if it is a toxic substance he must not consume it. The contents of the meal, with the exception of fish, will be defiled and rendered unlawful to eat if it [the substance that has fallen in] is something that can turn liquid. If it is a solid object, he must remove it along with the surrounding food, even if it is not in its nature to melt or dissolve, since he must not consume anything that could be poisonous. Such food is classed as unlawful *[yuḥarram]* on account of the harm it might cause, not in and of itself, like the snake and the scorpion. In the case of a fly, he should plunge it right into the foodstuff so that both of its wings are immersed, then take it out again; if it dies, the food or drink will be pure and fit to be consumed, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If a fly happens to fall into your cup or bowl, you must plunge it right inside, for one of its wings contains a disease, but the other contains a remedy and so provides protection against the one containing the disease.

The recommended practice is to sip a drink slowly, not to swig it in a gulp. The drinker should pause three times to catch his breath, and should not inhale and exhale inside the container. He should invoke the Name of Allāh when he starts to drink, and praise Allāh when he has finished.[16]

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[16] See note [14] on p. 320 above.

The whole of this subsection may be summarized by listing twelve practices [to be observed while eating and drinking], four of them being obligatory religious duties *[farīḍa]*, four being recommended customs *[sunna]*, and four being good manners *[ādāb]*.

As for the obligatory duties, these are:

- Awareness of what one is eating and where it comes from.
- The invocation of the Name of Allāh *[at-tasmiya]*.
- Having a feeling of contentment *[riḍā]*.
- Expressing one's gratitude *[shukr]*.

As for the recommended customs, they are:

- Sitting on the left leg [i.e., with the left leg tucked under].
- Using three fingers to eat with.
- Licking one's fingers.
- Eating from the part of the dish that is next to one.

As for the good manners, they are:

- Chewing vigorously and taking small mouthfuls.
- Not to keep looking at the faces of one's fellow diners.
- Not spreading bread all over the table and putting condiments on top of it.
- Not adopting a reclining posture while eating, and not sprawling on one's belly.

◆

On what to say when breaking fast at someone else's place.

When a person breaks his fast *[afṭara]* at someone else's place, he should say:

May those who keep the fast	*afṭara*
break their fast in your presence,	*'indakumu'ṣ-ṣā'imūn:*
and may righteous folk	*wa akala*
eat your food,	*ṭa'āmakumu'l-abrār:*
and may the Mercy (of Allāh)	*wa tanazzalat*
descend upon you,	*'alaikumu'r-raḥma:*
and may the angels invoke	*wa ṣallat*
blessings upon you.	*'alaikumu'l-malā'ika.*

Praise be to Allāh, who has	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi'lladhī*
fed us and quenched our thirst,	*aṭ'amanā wa saqānā*
and included us	*wa ja'alanā*
among the Muslims,	*mina'l-muslimīn:*
and guided us	*wa hadānā*
out of error,	*mina'd-dalāla:*
and graciously favored us over	*wa faddalanā 'alā*
many of those He	*kathīrina mimman*
has created.	*khalaqahu tafḍīlā.*

O Allāh, satisfy the hungry	*Allāhumma ashbi'*
members of the Community	*jiyā'a*
of Muḥammad	*ummati Muḥammadin*
(Allāh bless him	*(ṣalla'llāhu 'alaihi*
and give him peace!)	*wa sallam):*
and clothe those who are naked,	*wa aksi 'āriyahā*
and heal those who are sick,	*wa 'āfi marḍāhā*
and bring home those who are	*wa rudda ghā'ibahā*
absent and reunite	*wa'jma' shamla*
the household,	*ahli'd-dāri*
and supply their sustenance	*wa adarra*
in great abundance.	*arzāqahum.*

And let our coming in	*wa'j'al dukhūlanā*
be a gracious blessing,	*barakatan*
and our going forth	*wa khurūjanā*
a forgiveness.	*maghfira.*

On the orthodox Islamic doctrine concerning the Basin *[Ḥawḍ]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), from which the believers will quench their thirst at the Resurrection.

Those who remain faithful to the orthodox tradition of Islām *[ahl as-Sunna]* are firmly convinced that, when the Resurrection comes, our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) will have at his disposal a Basin *[Ḥawḍ]* from which he will supply water to quench the thirst of the believers, but not of the unbelievers, and that this drinking from the Basin will occur after their crossing of the Narrow Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]*, and prior to their entry into the Garden of Paradise.

Anyone who drinks a draught from the Basin will never feel thirsty again. The width of it is equal to the distance traveled in a month. Its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. Around it there are as many jugs as there are stars in the sky. Inside it there are two spouts, through which the water is channeled from the River of Abundance *[Kawthar]*, the source of which is in the Garden of Paradise, while its offshoot is at the Place of Standing.[266]

According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Thawbān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), it was mentioned by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) when he said:

> I shall be there beside my Basin on the Day of Resurrection.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asked about the capacity of the Basin, so he said:

> [It is as wide as] the distance between this spot, where I am standing now, and 'Umān [in the southeast corner of Arabia]. The drink it contains, which is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey, is channeled into it from the Garden of Paradise through two spouts, one of them made of silver and the other of gold. Anyone who drinks a draught from it will never feel thirsty again.

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[266] The site at 'Arafa where Pilgrims perform the rite of 'standing' *[wuqūf]*.

On the etiquette of the public steam bath *[ḥammām]*.

The construction of a public steam bath *[ḥammām]* is subject to disapproval, as are all business dealings associated with it, such as selling it, buying it or leasing it. The reason for this disapproval is the fact that people's private parts *[ʻaurāt]* are there exposed to view, and ʻAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "The public bathhouse is such an awful place! It deprives people of their modesty, and the Qur'ān must not be recited inside it."

As far as entering it is concerned, the best course is to avoid doing so altogether, unless one can find no satisfactory alternative, since we have learned on good authority that ʻUmar's son ʻAbdu'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), although he viewed the public steam bath with repugnance, would excuse his own use of it on the grounds that he was a person of limited resources.

Of al-Ḥasan and Ibn Sīrīn it is reported that neither of them would ever enter the public steam bath, and ʻAbdu'llāh the son of Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] once said: "I never saw my father go into the public steam bath."

If a person needs to use it, and his need is very urgent, it is permissible for him to enter the bathhouse, covering himself with a towel and averting his gaze so as not to see the private parts of other people. If possible, he should use the bathhouse when he can have it all to himself, so it is not a bad idea to enter it at night, or at least at a time during the day when its patrons are few and far between. When Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was asked a question on this subject, he said: "If you have ascertained that everyone inside the public steam bath is wearing a towel *[izār]*, you may enter it yourself, but if not, you should not go in there."

According to a report from ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The public bathhouse *[bait al-hammām]* is a very bad place! It is a house that offers no privacy, and its water is not pure.

ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) said of herself: "It would not give ʿĀʾisha any pleasure to have entered it, not even for [a pile of] gold as big as [Mount] Uḥud."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said, according to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Jābir ibn ʿAbdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

> If someone believes in Allāh and the Last Day, he must not enter the public steam bath without wearing a towel.

As far as women are concerned, it is also permissible for them to use the public steam bath, provided they fulfill the preconditions we have referred to as applicable to men.

They should have a valid pretext and a real need, such as illness, menstrual discharge *[haid]*, or bleeding in the period [of forty days] immediately following childbirth *[nifās]*, because of the report of Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), according to whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The land of the *ʿajam*[17] will be laid open to you, and there you will find houses called *hammām* [public steam baths]. The men must not enter them unless wrapped in a towel, and you must keep the womenfolk away from them, except for those who are sick or experiencing the aftermath of childbirth *[nafsāʾ]*.

When a person enters the public steam bath, he should not offer the Islamic greeting *[lā yusallim]*, nor should he recite the Qurʾān, because of the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), which has been quoted above.

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[17] The term *ʿajam* may refer to the non-Arabic-speaking "barbarian" nations in general, or in some contexts to the Persians in particular.

On the wearing of a signet ring and how to select one.

According to the report of Abū Dāwūd (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), supported by a chain of transmission *[isnād]* going back to Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the latter said: "When Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was proposing to write letters to certain non-Arab foreigners *[a'ājim]*,[18] he was told: 'They will not read a letter unless it bears a seal.' So he selected a signet ring *[khātam]* made of silver, and on it he engraved the inscription:

Muḥammad,	*Muḥammadun*
the Messenger of Allāh.	*Rasūlu'llāh*.

Anas (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having said: "The signet ring of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was made of silver, all of it, including the stone *[faṣṣ]*." In a different version, however, the wording attributed to Anas (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is: "The signet ring of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was made of beaten silver *[wariq]* and its stone was Abyssinian *[ḥabashī]*."

From another report provided by Abū Dāwūd, complete with chain of transmission, we learn on the authority of Nāfi' that Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) chose to use a signet ring made of gold, and he wore it with the stone next to the palm of his hand. On it he had engraved:

Muḥammad,	*Muḥammadun*
the Messenger of Allāh.	*Rasūlu'llāh*.

Everyone else then took to wearing signet rings made of gold, but when he saw them adopting this fashion, he threw his own ring away, saying: 'I shall never wear it again!' Then he selected a signet ring made of silver, on which he engraved the same inscription: *Muḥammadun Rasūlu'llāh*. This ring was worn after him by Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him). Then 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) wore it after the time of Abū Bakr, and then 'Uthmān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) wore it until it dropped into the well of Arīs."

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[18] The plural form *a'ājim* is synonymous with the collective term *'ajam* (see immediately preceding note).

On the impropriety of choosing a ring of iron or brass.

It is considered improper to select a signet ring made of iron or brass, on the basis of a report provided by Abū Dāwūd (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), complete with chain of transmission *[isnād]* going back to 'Abdu'llāh ibn Buraida, whose father (may Allāh be well pleased with him) told him:

"A man once came to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), wearing a signet ring made of brass. He said to him: 'How is it that I am picking up the smell of idols *[aṣnām]* from you?' So he threw the ring away. Then he came again, this time wearing a signet ring made of iron. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said to him: 'How is it that I see you wearing the ornament of the people of the Fire [of Hell]?' So the man said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, what material should I look for in selecting a ring?' To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'Choose one made of beaten silver, and do not add the slightest amount [of other metal] to it.'"

On the impropriety of wearing a signet ring on the middle finger or the index finger.

It is considered improper to wear a signet ring on the middle finger [*wusṭā*] or the index finger [*sabbāba*], since it has been reported that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) not to do so.

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On the preferability of wearing the signet ring on the left hand and on the little finger.

The preferred practice is to wear the signet ring on the left hand and on the little finger *[khinṣir]*. This is based on the report provided by Abū Dāwūd (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), complete with chain of transmission *[isnād]* going back to Nāfi', according to whom Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) said that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to wear his signet ring on his left hand, with its stone toward the palm of his hand.

The same report has come down to us from most of the righteous forefathers *[as-salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ]*. Besides, noncompliance with this practice is a custom and trademark of those who promote heretical innovations *[al-mubtadi'a]*.

Yet another consideration is the fact that it is proper to take hold of things with the right hand in order to place them in the left hand, so this [practice of wearing the ring on the little finger of the left hand] serves to protect the signet ring itself, as well as the names and letters inscribed upon it.

It has also been reported, on the authority of 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to wear a signet ring on his right hand. It could therefore be maintained that the right and left hands have an equal claim, although the view previously stated is the one preferred.

❧

On toilet manners *[ādāb al-khalā']* and the removal of traces of excrement *[istinjā']*.

When a person wishes to go to the toilet *[khalā']*, he must set aside any article on which there is some reference to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), such as a signet ring *[khātam]*, an amulet *[ta'wīdh]*, or anything else of the kind. He should step in with his left foot in front of his right foot, saying:

In the Name of Allāh!	*Bismi'llāh.*
I take refuge with Allāh	*a'ūdhu bi'llāhi*
from all bad things	*mina'l-khubuthi*
and unclean habits,	*wa'l-khabā'ith:*
and from the filthy one,	*wa mina'r-rajisi'n-*
the dirty one,	*najisi'sh-*
Satan the accursed.	*shaiṭāni'r-rajīm.*

This is based on the traditional report according to which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> These privies *[hushūsh]* are haunted *[muḥtadara]*, so you must seek refuge with Allāh from the devil, and this is what you should say: 'I take refuge with Allāh from all bad things and unclean habits, and from the filthy one, the dirty one, Satan the accursed.'

[While using the toilet] a person should keep his head covered and his body screened from view. He should not pull up his garment until he is squatting close to the ground.[19] His weight should be supported on his left leg, because this makes it easier to excrete what has to come out.

He should not engage in conversation. He should neither return the salutation of anyone who greets him, nor respond to anyone who talks to him. If he happens to sneeze, he should praise Allāh in his heart, [instead of saying *al-ḥamdu li'llāh* out loud.]

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[19] This assumes that the person is wearing a traditional Arab-style *thaub* [a long shirt, gown or robe], which needs to be pulled up in the toilet, unlike pants or trousers, which obviously need to be pulled down. For a clear understanding of these passages, the reader should also envision an earth closet, rather than a toilet equipped with a ceramic bowl and other modern appliances.

He should not raise his head toward the heavens. He must not laugh at what comes out of himself or out of some other person. He should keep well away from other people. He should use an out-of-the-way spot where the ground is soft enough to soak up his urine, so that it will not splash back on him, and where he will not be exposing his private parts *['awra]* for anyone to see. If the earth is hard, however, or if it is a windy spot, he must hold the tip of his penis *[dhakar]* close to the ground.

If he is out in the desert, he must neither face the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca] nor turn his back toward it; he should rather turn to the East or to the West, as advised by the tradition *[khabar]*. He must not be facing the sun or the moon, however.

A person must not urinate in any of the following places:

1. On a stone.
2. Beneath a tree, whether or not it is one that bears fruit, because people may seek the shelter of its shade and get their clothes dirty in the process, while any fruit that does fall will be contaminated.
3. On a public thoroughfare.
4. In a source of water supply.
5. In an enclosed courtyard.

To urinate in such places is to bring a curse upon oneself, as the tradition *[khabar]* has informed us.

In the place he is using as a toilet, a person should not mention Allāh, whether in a quotation from the Qur'ān or in any other context, out of respect for the purity of His Name (Almighty and Glorious is He); he should not go beyond saying "*Bismi'llāh* [In the Name of Allāh]" and praying for refuge from Satan, as described at the beginning of this subsection. Then, when he has done what he needed to do, he should say:

Praise be to Allāh, who has	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi'lladhī*
relieved me of discomfort,	*adhhaba 'annī'l-adhā*
and restored my well-being.	*wa 'āfānī:*
(I beg) Your forgiveness.	*ghufrānak.*

Then he should leave that spot and move over to one that is clean. He should not perform his cleansing operations there [in the first spot], in case his hand gets soiled by touching something unclean *[najāsa]*, or drops of urine stain his body and his clothes. Then he must examine the situation.

Murshid:	Director, Guide; One who shows His servants the right path.
Qāḍin:[357]	Judge; One who preordains the fate *[qāḍā']* of His creatures.
Ḥākim:	Ruler, Governor. (As we have already mentioned elsewhere in this work.[358])
Wā'id:	Promising; One who promises to reward His servants for obedient conduct.
Mutawa''id:	Threatening, Menacing; One who threatens to punish His servants for disobedient conduct.
Mukhawwif:	Fear-inspiring; One who puts His servants in fear of disobeying Him.
Muḥadhdhir:	Cautioning; One who warns His servants to beware of disobeying Him.[359]
Dhāmm:	Blaming, Dispraising; One who gives blame where blame is due.
Mādiḥ:	Praising, Commending; One who gives praise where praise is due.
Mukhāṭib:	Conversing, Discoursing; One who may address a servant of His in intelligible speech.
Mutakallim:	Speaker; One who uses the spoken word.
Qā'il:	Sayer; One who utters sayings in language intelligible to His human creatures.

All of these *[Mukhāṭib, Mutakallim* and *Qā'il]* can be traced back to the same concept, namely that the faculty of speech *[kalām]* is rightly attributed to Him.

Mu'dim:	Annihilating; One who can cause things to cease to exist. [In some contexts, however, the same word means "deprived, destitute, reduced to nought, unmade." This passive meaning is relevant to the first sentence in the following paragraph.]

It is permissible to characterize Him as *Mu'dim* in the sense that He has not been caused to exist *[lam yūjad]* and has not been made *[lam yuf'al]*. The same epithet is also appropriate in the sense that He is One

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[357] Since the final -n is not a root consonant, the word assumes the form *al-Qāḍī* when the definite article is prefixed to it.

[358] See p. 172 above.

[359] The verb *yuḥadhdhiru*, of which *muḥadhdhir* is the corresponding active participle, occurs twice in the Qur'ān:

> Allāh warns you to beware *[yuḥadhdhirukum]* of Himself. (3:28 and 30)

As for the posterior, [the procedure for cleaning it is as follows]: Holding the stone in his left hand, the person must rub it over the anal orifice *[masruba]* from the front end to the back, then throw it away. This may in fact be sufficient, but he should now take the second stone, start from the rear end of the orifice and rub it across to the front part, then throw it away. Then he should take the third stone, rub it all around the orifice and throw it away.

This may be all that is required, but if it is apparent to him, from traces of moisture on the last stone, that the anus is not yet perfectly clean, he should use extra stones up to five. If it is still not clean after all this, he must use more stones, up to seven or nine. He should not stop without having reached an odd number, and even if cleanliness is achieved with only one or two stones, he must still go on till he has used three, because the sacred law *[shar']* makes this a rule.

A different way of performing *istijmār* is sometimes referred to, namely the following procedure:

The person takes the stone in his left hand, presses it against the front end of the right side of his anal orifice, then draws it along to the rear end. Then he moves it over to the left and draws it toward the rear, until it reaches the same point again. He then takes a second stone and repeats the procedure, but starting from the front end of the left side this time. Then he takes a third stone and rubs it down the middle.

All these methods are permissible, for we know from the tradition *[athar]* that a man once said to one of the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]*, an Arab tribesman with whom he got into an argument: "I don't suppose you know the proper way to defecate *[al-khirā'a]*!" He replied: "Of course I do! By your father, I am actually quite an expert in it!" The man said: "Describe it to me, in that case," so he said: "I go off to an out-of-the-way spot and make sure the ground is right. I face toward the wormwood plant *[shīḥ]* and turn my back to the wind. I poise myself in the posture *[iq'ā']* of the gazelle and adopt the squatting position *[ijfāl]* of the ostrich."

(As for the *shīḥ*, it is a sweet-scented plant that grows in the desert. In this context, *iq'ā'* means sitting in an upright posture, with one's weight resting on the balls of the feet, and *ijfāl* means keeping one's buttocks off the ground.)

On the removal of traces of urine and excrement *[istinjā']* by means of water.

The removal of traces of urine and excrement *[istinjā']* by means of water should be carried out as follows:

Holding his penis *[qaḍīb]* with his left hand, the man should use his right hand to splash it with water, washing it seven times after trying hard to make sure it is quite empty of urine by squeezing and shaking *[istibrā']*,[21] grunting *[tanaḥnuḥ]*, and going to all the extra trouble we have mentioned [in the preceding subsection].

The jurists *[fuqahā']* of Medina (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them) have likened the male organ *[dhakar]* to the udder *[ḍar']*. One thing after another continues to issue from it, as long as a man keeps tugging at it, but when water falls onto the penis, the flow of urine *[bawl]* comes to a stop.

As for the backside *[dubr]*, the person must touch the spot with his left hand, while using his right hand to pour the water. He should keep pouring for a while, then ease up a bit as he checks the spot with his hand, until he is quite sure it is clean and rid of all trace of impurity.

It is not necessary for him to wash the internal part of either of the two orifices, because this is something from which he is exempt according to the sacred law *[shar']*. Nor is he under any obligation to perform *istinjā'* as a result of the emission of wind.

The ideal practice is to combine the two procedures of scraping *[istijmār]* with a solid object and washing with water. The purpose can be sufficiently achieved by a person confining himself to the use of stones, but the use of water is altogether preferable, because, as the saying goes: "If he does not perform *istinjā'* with water, he will be possessed by devilish insinuation *[idhā lam yastanji bi'l-mā' i'tarāhu'l-waswās]*." This is why certain poets are said to avoid using water for *istinjā'*. Since this gives rise to obscene and indecent language, it must be considered a misdeed. We take refuge with Allāh from language that is the product of filth and a rotten stench.

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[21] See note [20] on p. 340 above.

On cases where there is no alternative to the use of water.

In cases where the unclean substance *[najāsa]* has become widely dispersed, over the greater part of the glans *[ḥashafa]* at the front end, and of the buttocks at the rear end, nothing but water will suffice to remove it, because it has gone beyond the point of legal tolerance *[tarkhīṣ]*; it has thus become equivalent to uncleanness attaching to the rest of the body, to the thigh and the chest, for instance, and cannot be removed except by means of water.

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On which materials are permissible for *istijmār*.

For its use to be permissible for the purpose of *istijmār*, a substance must match the following description:

It must be a solid material, clean and capable of serving as a cleansing agent. It must be an inedible substance, possessing no sacred quality *[ḥurma]* and having no connection with any living creature *[ḥayawān]*.

It is not permissible to use dried dung *[rawth]* or decayed bone *[rimma]* for this purpose, because these constitute part of the diet of the jinn. Slippery materials like charcoal *[ḥumama]*, glass *[zujāja]* and smooth pebbles are also unsuitable, because they tend to smear and therefore do not clean properly.

On the preferability of wearing the signet ring on the left hand and on the little finger.

The preferred practice is to wear the signet ring on the left hand and on the little finger *[khinṣir]*. This is based on the report provided by Abū Dāwūd (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), complete with chain of transmission *[isnād]* going back to Nāfi', according to whom Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) said that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to wear his signet ring on his left hand, with its stone toward the palm of his hand.

The same report has come down to us from most of the righteous forefathers *[as-salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ]*. Besides, noncompliance with this practice is a custom and trademark of those who promote heretical innovations *[al-mubtadi'a]*.

Yet another consideration is the fact that it is proper to take hold of things with the right hand in order to place them in the left hand, so this [practice of wearing the ring on the little finger of the left hand] serves to protect the signet ring itself, as well as the names and letters inscribed upon it.

It has also been reported, on the authority of 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to wear a signet ring on his right hand. It could therefore be maintained that the right and left hands have an equal claim, although the view previously stated is the one preferred.

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where physical strength and sexual potency are at a low level. It can be recognized by its odor, which is like the odor of *ṭal‘* [the pollen of the palm-tree],[22] or that of dough *[‘ajīn]*.

The seminal fluid in itself is a pure substance, according to the more widely accepted of the two reported doctrines *[ashhar ar-riwāyatain]*. The emission of it nevertheless necessitates the washing of the whole body.

The corresponding fluid produced by the woman *[mā’ al-mar’a]* is thin and yellowish.

5. Wind or gas *[rīḥ]* may be discharged from the organ at the front *[qubl]*, if only on rare occasions, just as it is emitted from the posterior *[dubr]*.

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[22] According to the Arabic lexicographers, the *ṭal‘* is "what comes forth from the palm-tree and becomes dates if the tree is female; and if the tree is male it does not become dates, but is eaten in its fresh state, or is left upon the palm-tree a certain number of days until there comes to be produced in it a white substance like flour, [i.e., the pollen,] having a strong odor, and with this the female is fecundated; or a certain white thing that appears from the spathe of the palm-tree, to the color of which the teeth are likened, and to the odor thereof the sperma." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ṭ–L–‘*.)

On the recommended invocations *[adhkār]* to be offered when washing the various parts of the body.

Having finished the task of removing all traces of urine and excrement from the private parts, one should say:

O Allāh! Cleanse my heart	*Allāhumma naqqi qalbī*
of doubt and	*mina'sh-shakki*
hypocrisy,	*wa'n-nifāq:*
and keep my genitals	*wa ḥaṣṣin*
immune to all forms	*farjī*
of sexual misconduct.	*mina'l-fawāḥish.*

When pronouncing the *tasmiya* :

I take refuge with You from	*aʿūdhu bika*
the evil insinuations	*min hamazāti'sh-*
of the devils,	*shayāṭīn:*
and I take refuge with You,	*wa aʿūdhu*
my Lord, in case they should	*bika Rabbī*
approach me.	*an yaḥḍurūn.*

When washing one's hands:

O Allāh! I beg You	*Allāhumma innī*
to grant me good fortune	*as'aluka'l-yumna*
and blessed grace.	*wa'l-baraka:*
And I take refuge with You	*wa aʿūdhu bika mina'sh-*
from bad luck and disaster.	*shu'mi wa'l-halaka.*

When rinsing out one's mouth:

O Allāh! Help me to recite	*Allāhumma aʿinnī ʿalā*
the Qur'ān, Your Book,	*tilāwati'l-qur'āni kitābika*
and to practice frequent	*wa kathrati'dh-*
remembrance of You.	*dhikri lak.*

When snuffing water up one's nostrils:

O Allāh! Let me discover	*Allāhumma awjidnī*
the fragrance	*rā'iḥata'l-*
of the Garden (of Paradise)	*jannati*

> forgiveness but are not forgiven. It is certainly a fact that enjoining what is right and fair, and forbidding what is wrong and unfair, will neither drive away a blessing nor bring a time appointed [for death] any closer.
>
> It is certainly a fact that, when the priests [*aḥbār*] among the Jews and the monks [*ruhbān*] among the Christians ceased to enjoin what is right and fair and to forbid what is wrong and unfair, Allāh cursed them on the tongues of their Prophets [*anbiyā'*], and then they were overwhelmed by misfortune.

The enjoining of what is right and fair, and the forbidding of what is wrong and unfair, these are duties incumbent on every Muslim who is a free man [*ḥurr*], legally responsible for his actions [*mukallaf*], and sufficiently well informed about the issues, provided he has the capacity to perform these duties in a manner that will not actually result in a grave disturbance [*fasād ʿaẓīm*] and in serious damage to himself, his property and his family. It makes no difference whether he happens to be a leader of the community [*imām*], a scholar [*ʿālim*], a judge [*qāḍī*], or an ordinary citizen [*wāḥid mina'r-raʿiyya*].

When we stipulate that he must have clear and certain knowledge that something is indeed wrong and unfair, we do so for the simple reason that there is a danger here of falling into sin, because it is hard for the critic to be absolutely sure that the facts of the case are not contrary to what he suspects them to be. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> O you who believe! Avoid a great deal of suspicion. Some suspicion is a sin. (49:12)

A person is under no obligation to uncover that which has been concealed from him, because the effort to do so has been forbidden by Allāh (Exalted is He) in His words:

> Do not spy [*lā tajassasū*]! (49:12)

A person has a duty to condemn only that which is manifestly wrong. To pry into that which is concealed involves the disclosure of what has been kept hidden, and this is not allowed according to the sacred law [*sharʿ*].

While rubbing one's ears:

O Allāh!	*Allāhumma 'jʿalnī*
Let me be one of those	*mina'lladhīna*
who heed the spoken word,	*yastamiʿūna'l-qawla*
and then put the best part	*fa-yattabiʿūna*
of it into practice.	*aḥsanah.*

O Allāh!	*Allāhumma*
Let me hear the herald	*asmiʿnī*
of the Garden (of Paradise)	*munādiya'l- jannati*
together with the righteous.	*maʿa'l-abrār.*

Then, while rubbing one's neck:

O Allāh!	*Allāhumma*
Redeem my neck	*fakki raqabatī*
from the Fire (of Hell),	*mina'n-nār:*
and I take refuge with You	*wa aʿūdhu bika mina's-*
from all chains and shackles.	*salāsili wa'l-aghlāl.*

When washing one's right foot:

O Allāh!	*Allāhumma*
Let my feet stand firm upon	*thabbit qadamayya*
the Bridge, along with all	*ʿala'ṣ-ṣirāṭi*
the feet of the believers.	*maʿa aqdāmi'l-mu'minīn.*

Then, as one washes the left foot:

O Allāh!	*Allāhumma*
I take refuge with You,	*innī aʿūdhu bika*
in case my foot should slip	*an tazilla qadamī*
from the Bridge	*ʿani'ṣ-ṣirāṭi*
on the day when the feet	*yawma tazillu*
of the hypocrites.	*aqdāmu'l-*
will be slipping.	*munāfiqīn.*

Having finished the minor ablution [*wuḍū'*], it is appropriate to raise one's head heavenward, and then say:

I bear witness that there is	*ashhadu an lā ilāha*
no god but Allāh, Alone,	*illa'llāhu Waḥdah.*
without any partner.	*lā sharīka lah.*

And I bear witness that	*wa ashhadu*
Muḥammad is His servant	*anna Muḥammadan*
and His Messenger.	*ʿabduhu wa Rasūluh.*

Glory be to You	*subḥānaka*
and with Your praise!	*wa bi-ḥamdik.*
There is no god but You!	*lā ilāha illā Ant.*

I have done wrong and I have wronged myself.	*'amiltu sū'an* *wa ẓalamtu nafsī.*
I seek forgiveness from You and I beg You to relent, so forgive me and relent toward me.	*astaghfiruka* *wa as'aluka't-tauba:* *fa-'ghfir lī* *wa tub 'alayya.*
You are indeed the Ever-Relenting, the All-Compassionate!	*innaka Anta't-* *Tawwābu'r-* *Rahīm.*
O Allāh! Let me be one of those who truly repent.	*Allāhumma 'j'alnī* *mina't-* *tawwābīn:*
And let me be one of those who purify themselves.	*wa'j'alnī mina'l-* *mutaṭahhirīn:*
And let me be truly patient, truly thankful.	*wa'j'alnī* *ṣabūran shakūrā:*
And let me remember You and celebrate Your glory, early in the morning and at eventide.	*wa'j'alnī adhkuraka* *wa usabbiḥaka* *bukratan* *wa aṣīlā.*

The wife should be firmly convinced that this is better for her than fighting the holy war *[jihād]* and going on campaign *[ghazw]*, since Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> There is nothing better for a woman than her husband or a grave.

He once said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Wretched, wretched, wretched is a man who does not have a wife!

When someone asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, is this true even if he is rich in terms of material wealth?" he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Even if he is rich in terms of material wealth.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Wretched, wretched, wretched is a woman who does not have a husband!

When someone asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, is this true even if she is rich in terms of material wealth?" he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Even if she is rich in terms of material wealth.

◆

On the wearing of a signet ring and how to select one.

According to the report of Abū Dāwūd (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), supported by a chain of transmission *[isnād]* going back to Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the latter said: "When Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was proposing to write letters to certain non-Arab foreigners *[a'ājim]*,[18] he was told: 'They will not read a letter unless it bears a seal.' So he selected a signet ring *[khātam]* made of silver, and on it he engraved the inscription:

Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allāh.	*Muḥammadun* *Rasūlu'llāh*.

Anas (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having said: "The signet ring of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was made of silver, all of it, including the stone *[faṣṣ]*." In a different version, however, the wording attributed to Anas (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is: "The signet ring of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was made of beaten silver *[wariq]* and its stone was Abyssinian *[ḥabashī]*."

From another report provided by Abū Dāwūd, complete with chain of transmission, we learn on the authority of Nāfi' that Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) chose to use a signet ring made of gold, and he wore it with the stone next to the palm of his hand. On it he had engraved:

Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allāh.	*Muḥammadun* *Rasūlu'llāh*.

Everyone else then took to wearing signet rings made of gold, but when he saw them adopting this fashion, he threw his own ring away, person concerned is wearing another garment underneath the one used to provide support.[26]

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[18] The plural form *a'ājim* is synonymous with the collective term *'ajam* (see immediately preceding note).

It is likewise regarded as improper to wear a muffler over the mouth, and to cover the nose during the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

It is considered reprehensible for the men to imitate the women's style of dress, just as it is for the women to imitate the style of the men, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) cursed the person who would do such a thing, and warned him against it with dire threats.

Subject to disapproval during the ritual prayer is the squatting posture known as *iq'ā'*, which means that a person stretches the upper sides of his feet out on the ground and sits on his heels, or sits with both buttocks on the ground while keeping both feet erect. In the words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> It is a way of squatting that is like the squatting posture of the dog; it is forbidden to adopt it.

It is also reprehensible to wear any kind of clothing which is so transparent that the body can be seen through it. If the private parts *['aura]* are visible through it, the wearer is a *fāsiq* [an immoral person; one who falls short of the legal standard of rectitude under Islamic law]. It is as if he had deliberately exposed those parts to view when he was supposed to get himself dressed, and his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* cannot be valid when performed in such attire.

The sacred law extols the merits of *sarāwīl* [trousers or pants]. In the words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The *sarāwīl* are half of the suit of clothes.

This applies more imperatively where men are concerned.

It is considered improper to make the trouser panels *[bawā'ik]* too baggy; it is better and more suitable to make them tight-fitting, since this is more effective in concealing the private parts. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> O Allāh, forgive those women who wear trouser pants *[al-musarwalāt]*.

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[26] According to the Arabic lexicographers: "The Arabs not having walls in their deserts to lean against in their assembling, the man used to set up his knees in his sitting, and put against them a sword, or surround them [and his back] with a piece of cloth, or knit his hands, or arms, together upon them, and rest against them, this standing him instead of leaning.... Doing this in one garment is forbidden, in a tradition, lest, by accident, what decency requires to be concealed should become exposed." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *H–B–W*.)

On the recommended invocations *[adhkār]* to be offered when washing the various parts of the body.

Having finished the task of removing all traces of urine and excrement from the private parts, one should say:

O Allāh! Cleanse my heart	*Allāhumma naqqi qalbī*
of doubt and	*mina'sh-shakki*
hypocrisy,	*wa'n-nifāq:*
and keep my genitals	*wa ḥaṣṣin*
immune to all forms	*farjī*
of sexual misconduct.	*mina'l-fawāḥish.*

When pronouncing the *tasmiya* :

I take refuge with You from	*aʿūdhu bika*
the evil insinuations	*min hamazāti'sh-*
of the devils,	*shayāṭīn:*
and I take refuge with You,	*wa aʿūdhu*
my Lord, in case they should	*bika Rabbī*
approach me.	*an yaḥḍurūn.*

When washing one's hands:

O Allāh! I beg You	*Allāhumma innī*
to grant me good fortune	*as'aluka'l-yumna*
and blessed grace.	*wa'l-baraka:*
And I take refuge with You	*wa aʿūdhu bika mina'sh-*
from bad luck and disaster.	*shu'mi wa'l-halaka.*

When rinsing out one's mouth:

O Allāh! Help me to recite	*Allāhumma aʿinnī ʿalā*
the Qur'ān, Your Book,	*tilāwati'l-qur'āni kitābika*
and to practice frequent	*wa kathrati'dh-*
remembrance of You.	*dhikri lak.*

When snuffing water up one's nostrils:

O Allāh! Let me discover	*Allāhumma awjidnī*
the fragrance	*rā'iḥata'l-*
of the Garden (of Paradise)	*jannati*

On good practices connected with sleeping *[ādāb an-nawm]*.

For someone proposing to go to sleep, the following practices are recommended:

1. He should insert a stopper into the mouth of his water-skin.[29]
2. He should extinguish his lamp.
3. He should lock his door.
4. He should wash his mouth, if he happens to have eaten something with a strong odor, so the flies will not be attracted to it.
5. He should invoke the Name of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), by saying: "*Bismi'llāh* [In the Name of Allāh]."
6. Then he should say the words mentioned in the tradition reported by Abū Dāwūd (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), with its chain of transmission from Sa'īd ibn 'Ubaida, who said:

"This was told to me by al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father). He said: 'Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to me:

> "When you are ready to take to your bed, you must perform the minor ablution *[wuḍū']* as if for the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, then lie down on your right side and say:

O Allāh, I have turned my face	*Allāhumma innī*
in submission toward You.	*aslamtu wajhī ilaik:*
And I have delegated	*wa fauwaḍtu*
my affairs to You.	*amrī ilaik.*
And I have entrusted my back	*wa alja'tu ẓahrī*
to You for safe refuge,	*raghbatan*
in longing and in fear.	*wa rahbatan ilaik.*
There is nowhere	*lā malja'a*
to find refuge and nowhere	*wa lā manjā*
to find salvation from You,	*minka*
except (by turning) toward You.	*illā ilaik.*

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[29] A reminder that water is a very precious commodity in the desert, and must on no account be allowed to go to waste through spillage or evaporation.

I believe in Your Book	*āmantu bi-kitābika*
which You have revealed,	*'lladhī anzalt:*
and in Your Prophet	*wa bi-nabiyyika*
whom You have sent.	*'lladhī arsalt.*

> Thus, if you die, you will die in the natural state (of submission to the Creator's will) *['ala'l-fiṭra]*,[30] so let these be the last words you ever pronounce.'"

"Al-Barā' went on to say: 'So I said: "Let me see if I can repeat them from memory." Then I said: "...in Your Messenger *[Rasūlika]* whom You have sent." But he said: "No! '...and in Your Prophet *[Nabiyyika]* whom You have sent.'"'"

As mentioned in the traditional report *[khabar]*, a person should sleep lying on his right side, facing the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca], as he will be in the grave *[laḥd]*. There is no objection, however, to his going to sleep lying on his back, reflecting on the Kingdom *[malakūt]* of the heavens and the earth.

It is considered reprehensible to sleep lying flat on one's face.

If a person experiences a disturbing dream during his sleep, he should seek refuge with Allāh (Exalted is He) from the evil of it. He should spit to his left three times and say:

O Allāh, bless me with	*Allāhumma'rzuqnī*
the good part of my vision,	*khaira ru'yāya*
and keep me safe	*wa'kfinī*
from its evil part!	*sharrahā.*

He should also recite the Throne Verse *[Āyat al-Kursī]*,[31] then "Say,

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[30] The natural constitution *[fiṭra]*, with which every human being is created in the mother's womb, is an innate disposition to submit to the will of the Creator and to accept the true religion. (See Qur'ān 30:30.)

[31] Qur'ān 2:255, which reads:

Allāh! There is no god but He,	*Allāhu lā ilāha illā Huwa'l-*
the Living, the Eternal.	*Ḥayyu'l-Qayyūm.*
Neither slumber nor sleep can	*lā ta'khudhuhu sinatun*
overtake Him.	*wa lā naum.*
To Him belongs whatever	*lahu mā fi's-samāwāti*
there is in the heavens	*wa mā fi'l-arḍ.*
and whatever there is in the earth.	
Who is there to intercede	*man dha'lladhī yashfa'u*
with Him save by His leave?	*'indahu illā bi-idhnih.*
He knows what is in front of them	*ya'lamu mā baina aidīhim*
and what is behind them,	*wa mā khalfahum.*
while they encompass nothing of	*wa lā yuḥīṭūna bi-shai'in min*
His knowledge save what He will.	*'ilmihi illā bi-mā shā'.*
His throne comprises	*wasi'a kursiyyuhu's-*
the heavens and the earth,	*samāwāti wa'l-arḍ.*
and He is never weary	*wa lā ya'ūduhu*
of preserving them.	*ḥifẓuhumā.*
He is the All-High, the All-Glorious.	*wa Huwa'l-'Aliyyu'l-'Aẓīm.*

'He is Allāh, the One [qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad],'"[32] and the two Qur'ānic prayers for divine refuge [Mu'awwidhatān][33]—unless he is *junub* [in a state of ritual impurity].

He should not seek an interpretation of his dream from anyone who is not a qualified expert, such as a learned scholar [*'ālim*] or a wise man [*ḥakīm*]. The interpreter should also be a loving friend.

He should not try to interpret his lascivious fantasies [*aḥlām*], because the devil [*shaiṭān*] may appear to him in disguise. Abū Qatāda (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "I once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> The lascivious fantasy [*hulm*] is from the devil, so if one of you dreams of something he finds unpleasant, let him spit to his left three times, then let him pray for refuge [*yata'awwadh*] from the evil of it, for thus it will do him no harm."

Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "When Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had finished the early morning ritual prayer [*ṣalāt al-ghadāt*], he used to say: 'Did any of you experience a visionary dream [*ru'yā*] during the night?' He would also say:

> No part of Prophethood [*nubuwwa*] will be left after me, except the righteous visionary dream [*ru'yā ṣāliḥa*]."

In the tradition [*ḥadīth*] of 'Ubāda ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> The visionary dream of the believer [*mu'min*] is a forty-sixth part of Prophethood.

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[32] Qur'ān 112, Sincere Devotion [*al-Ikhlāṣ*], for which see p. 161 above.

[33] Qur'ān 113, The Daybreak [*al-Falaq*] and 114, Mankind [*an-Nās*]:

Say: "I take refuge with	*qul a'ūdhu*
the Lord of the Daybreak	*bi-Rabbi'l-falaq:*
from the evil of what He has created,	*min sharri mā khalaq:*
from the evil of the darkness	*wa min sharri ghāsiqin*
when it is intense,	*idhā waqab:*
from the evil of the witches	*wa min sharri'n-naffāthāti*
who blow on knots,	*fi'l-'uqad:*
and from the evil of the envier	*wa min sharri ḥāsidin*
when he envies."	*idhā ḥasad.*

Say: "I take refuge with	*qul a'ūdhu*
the Lord of mankind,	*bi-Rabbi'n-nās:*
the King of mankind,	*Maliki'n-nās:*
the God of mankind,	*Ilāhi'n-nās:*
from the evil of the	*min sharri'l-*
slinking whisperer,	*waswāsi'l-khannās:*
who whispers in	*alladhī yuwaswisu fī*
the breasts of mankind,	*ṣudūri'n-nāsi*
of the jinn and of mankind."	*mina'l-jinnati wa'n-nās.*

On what to say when leaving the house.

When a person is intending to go outside his house, he should pronounce the words that have been handed down to us in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of ash-Shaʿbī, according to whom [the Prophet's wife] Umm Salama (may Allāh be well pleased with her) said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never went out of his house without raising his gaze toward heaven and saying:

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma innī*
I take refuge with You,	*aʿūdhu bika*
lest I should stray	*an aḍilla*
or be led astray,	*aw uḍalla*
or stumble	*aw azilla*
or be made to stumble,	*aw uzalla*
or commit an injustice	*aw aẓlima*
or suffer an injustice,	*aw uẓlama*
or behave foolishly or	*aw ajhala*
suffer foolish treatment."	*aw yujhala ʿalayya."*

◆

> forgiveness but are not forgiven. It is certainly a fact that enjoining what is right and fair, and forbidding what is wrong and unfair, will neither drive away a blessing nor bring a time appointed [for death] any closer.
>
> It is certainly a fact that, when the priests *[aḥbār]* among the Jews and the monks *[ruhbān]* among the Christians ceased to enjoin what is right and fair and to forbid what is wrong and unfair, Allāh cursed them on the tongues of their Prophets *[anbiyā']*, and then they were overwhelmed by misfortune.

The enjoining of what is right and fair, and the forbidding of what is wrong and unfair, these are duties incumbent on every Muslim who is a free man *[ḥurr]*, legally responsible for his actions *[mukallaf]*, and sufficiently well informed about the issues, provided he has the capacity to perform these duties in a manner that will not actually result in a grave disturbance *[fasād 'aẓīm]* and in serious damage to himself, his property and his family. It makes no difference whether he happens to be a leader of the community *[imām]*, a scholar *['ālim]*, a judge *[qāḍī]*, or an ordinary citizen *[wāḥid mina'r-ra'iyya]*.

When we stipulate that he must have clear and certain knowledge that something is indeed wrong and unfair, we do so for the simple reason that there is a danger here of falling into sin, because it is hard for the critic to be absolutely sure that the facts of the case are not contrary to what he suspects them to be. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> O you who believe! Avoid a great deal of suspicion. Some suspicion is a sin. (49:12)

A person is under no obligation to uncover that which has been concealed from him, because the effort to do so has been forbidden by Allāh (Exalted is He) in His words:

> Do not spy *[lā tajassasū]*! (49:12)

A person has a duty to condemn only that which is manifestly wrong. To pry into that which is concealed involves the disclosure of what has been kept hidden, and this is not allowed according to the sacred law *[shar']*.

or a providential gift which You distribute,	*aw rizqin* *tabsiṭuhu*
or something harmful which You remove,	*aw durrin* *takshifuhu*
or a sin which You forgive,	*aw dhanbin taghfiruhu*
or a disaster which You stave off,	*aw shiddatin* *tadfa'uhā*
or a temptation which You avert,	*aw fitnatin* *taṣrifuhā*
or a dispensation which You bestow through Your mercy.	*aw mu'āfātin tamunnu* *bihā bi-raḥmatik.*
You are indeed Powerful over all things.	*innaka 'alā kulli* *shai'in Qadīr.*

On the license to kill animal creatures; where this is allowed and where it is not permissible.

If a person happens to catch sight of any [ordinary] kind of snake *[ḥayya]* inside his house, he should give it three warnings to clear off. Then, if he sees fit, he may kill it. Out in the desert, on the other hand, it is permissible for him to kill a snake without giving it any advance warning at all.

The same applies [under any circumstances] to the serpent called *al-abtar*, which has a very short tail [as the name suggests],[35] and to the one called *dhu'ṭ-ṭufyatain*,[36] which has a black stripe on its back;[37] these [particularly malignant creatures] should be killed without prior warning.

The proper way to give warning notice is to say [to the snake]:

Depart in peace!	*imḍi bi-'s-salām*.
Do not harm us!	*lā tu'dhinā*.

According to a report that has been handed down to us concerning this very subject, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was once asked about house snakes *[ḥayyāt al-buyūt]*, so he said in reply:

> If you see anything of the kind inside your homes, you must say: "Let me remind you of the covenant which Noah made you agree to honor; let me remind you of the covenant which Solomon made you agree to honor—that you would not harm us."[38] Then, if they come back again, kill them.

In the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Sālim we have it on the authority of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

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[35] The Arabic word *abtar* means: '[a creature] having either the whole or a part of its tail cut off.'

[36] "The one with [markings that resemble] two leaves of the Theban palm."

[37] **Author's note**: Some say it has two black bristles between its eyes.

[38] *anshudukumu'l-ʿahda'lladhī akhadhahu ʿalaikum Nūḥ—anshudukumu'l-ʿahda'lladhī akhadhahu ʿalaikum Sulaimān—an lā tu'dhūnā*.

> Kill the snakes *[ḥayyāt]*, and [especially the serpents] *dhu'ṭ-ṭufyatain* and *al-abtar*, for these two can totally eradicate the faculty of sight and cause the fetus *[ḥabal]* to be aborted from the womb.

Sālim said: "'Abdu'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to kill every snake he happened to find, until the day came when Abū Lubāba (may Allāh be well pleased with him), noticing that he was trying to catch a snake, informed him that it was now forbidden to kill the house-dwelling species *[dhawāt al-buyūt]*."

To explain how this prohibition came to be introduced in the case of the house-dwelling species, we must quote the account given by Abu's-Sā'ib, who said:

"I had gone to visit Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him). At some point while I was sitting there in his company, I heard something moving about underneath his settee, so I peeped to see what it might be—and there was a snake! I jumped up from my seat, causing Abū Sa'īd to ask what was bothering me. 'There's a snake in here!' said I. 'What do you propose to do about it?' said he. 'I am going to kill it,' said I. Then he pointed to an apartment in his house, facing his own apartment., and said:

"'A cousin of mine[39] used to live in that apartment over there. Then came the Day of [the Battle with] the Combined Forces *[Yaum al-Aḥzāb]*,[40] and he took leave of his wife. But, since he was a very recent bridegroom, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) excused him [from military service] and ordered him to go in peace. He arrived back home to find his wife standing at the door to the apartment, so he waved to her with his spear. Then she said: "Don't do anything in a hurry, until you see what has made me come outside!" So he went into the apartment—and there was a nasty snake!

[39] A more exact translation of *ibn 'amm lī* would be: 'The son of an uncle of mine, on my father's side of the family.'

[40] Also known as *Yaum al-Khandaq* [the Day, or Battle, of the Trench or Moat].
As explained by Yūsuf 'Alī in his commentary on his translation of the Qur'ān (33:1):

> "The fifth year A.H. was a critical year in the external history of early Islām.... The Grand Confederacy against Islām came and invested Medina and failed utterly. It consisted of the Meccan Unbelievers, the desert Arabs of Central Arabia, the Jews previously expelled for treachery from Medina, the Jews remaining in Medina, and the Hypocrites led by 'Abdullāh ibn Ubai."

He stabbed it with his weapon, then came out with it writhing on the spear.'

"[Abū Sa'īd] went on to say: 'I don't know which of the two was the quicker to die, the man or the snake. Anyway, his friends and family came to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and said: "Plead with Allāh (Exalted is He) to restore our companion!" But he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace) by telling them: "You must pray for forgiveness on behalf of your companion." Then he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> [It has actually happened that] a group of the *jinn* became Muslims *[aslamū]* in Medina, so if you ever catch sight of one of those [house-dwelling snakes], you must warn it *[fa-hadhdhirūhu]* three times. Then, if you see fit after you have warned it, you may kill it—after the three [warnings]!'"

In one of several versions of this report, the wording is:

> [If someone catches sight of one of them], let him caution it *[fa-l'yu'dhinhu]* three times. Then, if he sees fit, he should kill it, for it can only be a devil *[shaiṭān]*.

It is permissible to kill geckoes,[41] since it has been reported by 'Āmir ibn Sa'īd that his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him) told him: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) ordered the killing of the gecko, and he called it a wicked little rascal *[fuwaisiq]*."

As reported by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said: "In the first blow there are seventy good deeds," meaning that such is the merit earned by killing the creature with a single blow.

It is considered reprehensible to kill the ant *[namla]*, unless it is causing serious damage, because Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) reported the following saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> One of the Prophets *[anbiyā']* was bitten by an ant, so he ordered the eradication of the ants' nest, which was accordingly destroyed by fire. Then Allāh (Exalted is He) said to him by way of inspiration:
>
> "If one ant bites you, does that spell annihilation for an entire community *[umma]* of the creatures that burrow [in the earth]?"

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[41] The gecko *[wazagh]* is a soft-skinned, insect-eating lizard with a short, stout body, a large head, and suction pads on its feet.

It is also reprehensible to kill the frog *[difdi'* or *ḍafda']*, because of a report from 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn 'Uthmān, who said that he once asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about the use of frogs in a certain medicinal preparation, and the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) forbade him to kill them.

Killing by means of fire must always be viewed as an abomination, even in those cases where it is otherwise permissible to kill the creatures concerned, such as lice *[qaml]*, bedbugs *[baqq]*, fleas *[barāghīth]* and ants *[naml]*. This is based on the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> No one may inflict punishment by means of fire, except the Lord of the Fire *[Rabb an-Nār]*.

It is permissible to kill any of those animal creatures *[ḥayawānāt]* that are always likely to cause harm. [This rule applies] even if a particular specimen, despite the fact that it was created with a noxious character, has not actually exhibited any harmful behavior, because the tendency toward such behavior must be inherent in its nature. Typical examples are the kind of snake which we have already described, the scorpion *['aqrab]*, the rapacious predator *[kalb 'aqūr]*,[42] the rat and the mouse *[fa'ra]*,[43] and other creatures like them. Included in the same category is the jet-black hound *[kalb bahīm]*, which is black all over [with not the slightest trace of any lighter color], because it is a devil *[shaiṭān]*.

If a person comes across any animal when it is suffering from thirst, he will be granted a [spiritual] reward for giving it water to drink, because, as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> In [the giving of water to] any liver that is dried up by thirst from intense heat, [there shall be] a recompense.[44]

This is based on the assumption that the animal concerned is not a harmful one. In the case of a malignant creature, water should not be provided to quench its thirst, because that would amount to the promotion and multiplication of injuries, which is something that cannot be permitted.

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[42] Although the normal meaning of the Arabic word *kalb* is simply 'a dog,' the term *kalb 'aqūr* is apparently extended to include other rapacious beasts. According to the authorities cited by E.W. Lane (*Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *'–Q–R*), the intensive epithet *'aqūr*, meaning "that wounds, and kills, and seizes its prey and breaks its neck," is applied not only to a dog, but "to any animal of prey, as a lion, and a lynx, and a leopard, and a wolf, and the like, each of these being called *kalb 'aqūr*, because of the same rapacious nature as the dog."

[43] The Arabic word *fa'r* (the collective form, of which *fa'ra* is the corresponding singular) is a generic term for rats and mice alike.

[44] *fī kulli kabidin ḥarrā ajr.*

It is not permissible for a person to acquire a dog and train it at his place of residence, unless he intends to use it as a watchdog, or for hunting purposes, or to shepherd his livestock. If it is rapacious [*'aqūr*], he must get rid of it, according to one stated opinion, and it really ought to be killed, to forestall the damage it could do to people. According to one of the traditions [*aḥādīth*] that have been handed down to us:

> If someone acquires a dog for any purpose other than the hunting of game or the shepherding of livestock, his remuneration [*ajr*] will be diminished at the rate of two carats [*qīrāṭān*] per day.

It is not permissible to overwork a domesticated animal [*ḥayawān bahīma*] beyond its normal capacity for carrying loads, plowing fields or traveling on journeys, nor to provide it with less than a sufficient quantity of fodder. If a person does behave like this, he is guilty of committing a sinful offense. It is also reprehensible to feed the animal beyond its normal capacity, or to subject it to force-feeding, a practice commonly adopted for the purpose of fattening.

It is considered improper to live off the earnings of the cupper [*ḥajjām*],[45] because there is something demeaning about this profession. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has in fact said:

> What the cupper does to earn a livelihood is quite disgusting [*kasb al-ḥajjām khabīth*].

Some of our colleagues [in the Ḥanbalī school of Islamic jurisprudence] have actually declared it unlawful, because an opinion to such effect has been attributed to Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal himself (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him).

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[45] A cupper [*ḥajjām*] is a practitioner of the art of cupping [*ḥijāma*]. This procedure, widely used in former times as a treatment for a variety of illnesses, consists in the application to the patient's skin of a glass cup or vessel [*miḥjama*] in which a vacuum has been created, in order to draw the blood to the surface.

As mentioned in the Book of Fasting (p. 22 above), a person who is keeping the Islāmic fast must neither perform *ḥijāma* on someone else, nor have the operation performed on himself, during the daylight hours.

On the proper manners to be observed when visiting burial grounds *[maqābir]*.

It is considered improper to wear shoes while walking in burial grounds. For a person entering such grounds, the recommended practice is to say:

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
Lord of these corpses	*Rabba hādhihi'l-*
in decay	*ajsādi'l-bāliyati*
and of these rotting bones,	*wa'l-'iẓāmi'n-*
which have departed	*nakhirati'llatī kharajat*
from the realm of this world	*min dāri'd-dunyā*
and are now in Your care.	*wa hiya bika mu'na.*

Bless Muḥammad and	*ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin*
the family of Muḥammad,	*wa 'alā āli Muḥammad:*
and bestow upon them	*wa anzil 'alaihim*
a spirit from You	*rūḥan minka*
and a salutation from me.	*wa salāman minnī.*

The visitor should also say:

Peace be upon you, O abode	*as-salāmu 'alaikum*
of a group of believers,	*dāra qawmin mu'minīn:*
and we shall be joining you,	*wa innā in shā'a'llāhu*
if Allāh so wills!	*bikum lāḥiqūn.*

[He should add this last-mentioned salutation] because it has also been handed down by traditional report.

When a Muslim visits a grave or tomb *[qabr]*, he must not lay his hand upon it, nor should he kiss it, because that is the custom of the Jews. He must not sit upon it, nor lean upon it, nor tread upon it, unless it is absolutely necessary for him to do any of these things. He should rather stand erect on a spot nearby, as if in the presence of a living person, and he must treat him with respect, as if he were still alive. He should recite "Say: 'He is Allāh, the One *[qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad]*,'"[46] eleven times over, and other selections from the Qur'ān. Then he should offer the spiritual reward for this as a gift to the occupant of the tomb, which he can do by saying:

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[46] The 112th *Sūra* of the Qur'ān, entitled *al-Ikhlāṣ* [Sincere Devotion].

O Allāh, in case You would	*Allāhumma in kunta*
be rewarding me for	*qad athabtanī ʿalā*
the recitation of this Sūra,	*qirāʾati hādhihi's-sūra:*
I have already donated	*fa-innī qad*
the reward for it to the	*ahdaitu thawābahā*
occupant of this tomb.	*li-ṣāḥibi hādha'l-qabr.*

Then he may ask Allāh to supply some need of his own.

[The visitor to a burial ground] should neither break nor even tread upon a bone. If it is impossible for him to avoid doing so, because he is subject to forces beyond his control, he must compensate by making a plea for [Allāh's] forgiveness on behalf of the occupant of the grave.

On cases where there is no alternative to the use of water.

In cases where the unclean substance *[najāsa]* has become widely dispersed, over the greater part of the glans *[ḥashafa]* at the front end, and of the buttocks at the rear end, nothing but water will suffice to remove it, because it has gone beyond the point of legal tolerance *[tarkhīṣ]*; it has thus become equivalent to uncleanness attaching to the rest of the body, to the thigh and the chest, for instance, and cannot be removed except by means of water.

❧

On the permissibility of greeting someone with "May Allāh bless you *[ṣalla'llāhu ʿalaik]*!"

It is quite permissible for one man to greet another by saying:

May Allāh bless you!	*ṣalla'llāhu ʿalaik.*

It is also permissible to say:

May Allāh bless So-and-so, the son of So-and-so!	*ṣalla'llāhu ʿalā* *fulāni'bni fulān.*

[These statements can be made] because ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is known to have greeted ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) with: "May Allāh bless you!" and the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said: "O Allāh, bless the family of Abū Awfā *[Allāhumma ṣalli ʿalā āli Abī Awfā]*!"

◆

On the impropriety of shaking hands with members of the protected non-Muslim communities *[ahl adh-dhimma]*.

It is considered improper to shake hands *[muṣāfaḥa]* with members of the protected non-Muslim communities *[ahl adh-dhimma]*, because it has been reported by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Do not shake hands with the *ahl adh-dhimma*.

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An appropriate charm for a victim of the fever.

A suitable formula, to be written out and attached [as an amulet] to a victim of the fever, is the invocation used by Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who is reported as having said:

"I once became feverish, so this was inscribed for me [as a charm to bring relief] from the fever:

In the Name of Allāh,	*Bismi'llāhi'r-*
the All-Merciful	*Rahmāni'r-*
and Compassionate.	*Rahīm.*
In the Name of Allāh	*Bismi'llāhi*
and by Allāh!	*wa bi'llāh.*
Muḥammad is	*Muhammadur*
the Messenger of Allāh.	*Rasūlu'llāh.*
"O fire, be coolness	*yā nāru kūnī bardan*
and peace for Abraham." (21:69)	*wa salāman 'alā Ibrāhīm.*
"And they wished to set	*wa arādū bihi kaidan*
a snare for him, but We made	*wa-ja'alnāhumu'l-*
them the greater losers." (21:70)	*akhsarīn.*
O Allāh, the Lord of Gabriel	*Allāhumma Rabba Jibrīla*
and Michael and Isrāfīl,[47]	*wa Mīkā'īla wa Isrāfīl:*
heal the owner of this	*ishfi ṣāḥiba*
piece of writing,	*hādha'l-kitāb:*
through Your power and	*bi-ḥawlika wa quwwatika*
Your strength and Your might,	*wa jabarūtika*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!"	*yā Arḥama'r-rāḥimīn.*

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[47] Isrāfīl is the angel who is to blow the trumpet on the Day of Resurrection.

An appropriate charm for the benefit of a woman experiencing difficult labor in childbirth.

According to some of our colleagues [in the Ḥanbalī school of Islamic jurisprudence], the following invocation should be inscribed in a clean cup or vessel, [as a charm] for a woman experiencing difficult labor in the process of giving birth:

In the Name of Allāh,	*Bismi'llāhi'r-*
the All-Merciful,	*Raḥmāni'r-*
the All-Compassionate.	*Rahīm.*
There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa'llāhu'l-*
the Ever-Gentle, Ever-Gracious.	*Ḥalīmu'l-Karīm.*
Glory be to Allāh,	*subḥāna'llāhi*
Lord of the Splendid Throne!	*Rabbi'l-ʻarshi'l-ʻaẓīm.*
Praise be to Allāh,	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*
Lord of All the Worlds!	*Rabbi'l-ʻālamīn.*
"On the day when	*ka-annahum yauma*
they behold it, it will be as if	*yaraunahā*
they had but tarried for an	*lam yalbathū illā*
evening or the morn thereof."[48]	*ʻashiyyatan au ḍuḥāhā.*
"It will be as if, on the day	*ka-annahum yauma*
when they see that which	*yarauna*
they are promised,	*mā yūʻadūna*
they had tarried but for	*lam yalbathū illā*
an hour of a single day.	*sāʻatan min nahār.*
A clear message!	*balāgh.*
And shall any be destroyed but	*fa-hal yuhlaku*
the people of the unrighteous?"[49]	*illa'l-qaumu'l-fāsiqūn.*

The cup should then be washed and, after the woman has taken a drink from it, the remaining drops of water should be sprinkled on her breast.

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[48] Qur'ān 79:46.

[49] Qur'ān 46:35

It is likewise permissible to employ charms *[ruqya]* against the ant *[namla]* and other creatures [that sting or bite], such as scorpions *['aqārib]*, snakes *[ḥayyāt]* and fleas *[barāghīth]*, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) allowed the use of charms against any venomous creature *[dhū ḥumma]*. He said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If a person says three times, as soon as evening falls:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | May Allāh bless Noah, | *ṣalla'llāhu 'alā Nūḥin* |
> | and upon Noah be peace! | *wa 'alā Nūḥini's-salām.* |
>
> —no scorpion will sting him that night.

He has also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If a person says three times, as soon as evening falls:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | I take refuge with all | *a'ūdhu bi-kalimāti* |
> | the perfect words of Allāh, | *'llāhi't-tāmmāti kullihā* |
> | from the evil of that | *min sharri* |
> | which He has created! | *mā khalaq.* |
>
> —he will not be harmed by any bite or sting that night.

It is permissible to puff one's breath onto charms, but spitting on them is viewed with disapprobation.

◆

some barrier intervenes between him and them, such as a door or a wall.

If a person reencounters a man he has already greeted once, he should salute him again.

The greeting should not be offered to those who are involved in sins of disobedience *[maʿāṣī]*, for instance by someone who happens upon a group of people playing chess *[shaṭranj]* and backgammon *[nard]*, drinking wine, playing games with walnuts and placing bets *[qimār]*. If they salute him first, however, he should return their greeting, unless he has good reason to believe that they may be shamed out of their sinful activities by his refusal to respond, in which case he should withhold his response.

A Muslim should not avoid his brother's company on more than three occasions in a row, unless the person concerned is one of those who are guilty of heretical innovations *[bidaʿ]*, serious error and sins of disobedience, for permanent avoidance of such types is the recommended course. By offering the greeting *[salām]*, one is saved from the sin *[ithm]* of shunning a fellow Muslim.

The Muslim is also recommended to shake hands *[muṣāḥafa]* with his brother. If he has initiated the handshake, he should not withdraw his hand until the other withdraws his.

It is permissible [for Muslim brothers] to hug each other, and to kiss each other on the head and the hand, as a request for blessing *[tabarruk]* and an expression of pious devotion *[tadayyun]*. Kissing on the mouth, however, is considered reprehensible *[makrūh]*.

contain the water]. Then he ordered him to take it and pour it over his [Abū Umāma's] head, whereupon the vessel was tipped over him from behind, as far as I could tell. Then he instructed him to drink a few sips from it, which he did. Then he rode away in company."

Provided the offender has washed himself thoroughly by performing a complete ablution, and has then poured the water over the victim of the evil eye [*maʿīn*], he will have accomplished [everything required of him].

* * *

On the permissibility of various forms of medical treatment *[taʿāluj]*.

Permissible forms of medical treatment *[taʿāluj]* for various diseases include cupping *[ḥijāma]*,[51] venesection *[faṣd]*,[52] cautery *[kayy]*,[53] the drinking of medicinal drugs *[adwiya]* and beverages *[ashriba]*, the slitting of the veins *[qaṭʿ al-ʿurūq]*, the lancing of abscesses *[baṭṭ]*, the amputation of a limb *[qaṭʿ al-ʿaḍw]* to prevent a gangrenous infection *[akila]* from spreading to the rest of the body, the surgical removal of hemorrhoids *[bawāsīr]*, and anything else that is conducive to the welfare of the physical body.

This statement is based on a traditional report, by which we are informed that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had blood drawn from him by the operation of cupping *[iḥtajama]*, and that he consulted the physician *[ṭabīb]*. He then said to the medical practitioners *[ṭibbiyyūn]*: "Your advice is just medical therapy *[ṭibb]*," so they asked him: "O Messenger of Allāh, is there any good in medical therapy?" He said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The One who sent down the sickness *[dā']* has surely sent down the remedy *[dawā']*.

When Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] was asked about cautery *[kayy]*, he said: "The Arabs of the desert sometimes practice it. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed cautery himself, as did the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* (may Allāh be well pleased with them all)." He also said, on a different occasion: "ʿImrān ibn Ḥuṣain (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) made incisions in the veins of women."

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[51] For more on the subject of cupping *[ḥijāma]*, see note [45] on p. 365 above.

[52] Blood-letting by opening a vein (also known as phlebotomy.)

[53] Cautery is an operation performed with a hot iron, or with a caustic substance, to assist the healing of a wound by destroying dead tissue.

According to another account of his doctrine, however, Imām Aḥmad (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) assigned this to the category of reprehensible practices.

As for the treatment of illness [*tadāwī*] by means of any unlawful substance, such as wine [*khamr*], poison [*samm*], the meat of an animal not slaughtered in accordance with the ritual requirements of Islamic law [*maita*], or anything that is unclean [*najis*], this cannot be permissible. The same must apply to treatment using the milk of the domestic she-ass [*atān ahliyya*], since the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> The healing of my Community has not been made to reside in that which has been declared unlawful for its members.[54]

Treatment by means of an enema or clyster [*ḥuqna*][55] is considered undesirable, except in a case of emergency.

It is not permissible to flee from the plague [*ṭā'ūn*], but if a person is out of the town or country [where the plague is rampant], he must not approach it, since he could be virtually committing suicide by doing so.

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[54] *mā ju'ila shifā'u Ummatī fī mā ḥurrima 'alaihā.*

[55] The injection of a liquid or gaseous substance into the rectum, by means of a syringe [*miḥqana*].

On surnames and personal names *[al-kunā wa'l-asmā']*,[76] some of which are recommended, while others are subject to disapproval.

It is forbidden for a man to give his son both the personal name *[Muḥammad]* and the surname *[Abu'l-Qāsim]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace),[77] although it is permissible for him to give either of these separately from the other.

According to one of two conflicting versions of the doctrine ascribed to Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), he took an unfavorable view of this practice as a whole; in other words, he disapproved of both the combination *[jam']* and the separate application *[ifrād]*. By the other account, however, he considered it permissible in any form.

To prove the permissibility of naming *[tasmiya]* with the personal name *[ism]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) but not with his surname *[kunya]*, we may cite the evidence reported by Anas ibn Mālik and Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), according to whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> You may give my name as a personal name *[sammū bi-'smī]*, but do not give my surname as a surname *[wa lā tukannū bi-kunyatī]*.

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[76] The corresponding singular forms are *kunya* and *ism*. The *kunya* is a surname of relationship, in which the first element may be *Abū* [Father (of)...], or *Umm* [Mother (of)...], or *Ibn* [Son (of)...], or *Bint* [Daughter (of)...].

[77] The printed version of the Arabic text appears to be defective at this point. As it stands, it would mean: "It is forbidden for a person to name *[an yusammiya]* his son and to surname him *[yukannuhu*, presumably a misprint for *yukanniyahu]* with the personal name *[ism]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) but not with *[dūna]* his surname *[kunya]*." The seemingly ungrammatical form *yukannuhu* may be a clue, suggesting the possible omission of a whole line of text, in the context of which this form would actually be correct.

On the proper treatment of slaves, both male and female.

If a person is the owner of a slave *[mamlūk]*, whether male or female, he is under an obligation to treat him [or her][58] decently. He must not overburden him with work beyond his capacity. He must clothe him and feed him. He must allow him to marry, if he wishes to do so, but he must not coerce him into marriage.

If the owner fails to discharge this obligation, he is guilty of sinful disobedience. He must be ordered to sell his slave, unless he chooses to emancipate him.

As another alternative, available to him only if it is requested by the slave *[ʿabd]* himself, he may enter into a contract with him, whereby the slave will obtain his freedom on the payment of a certain sum.[59]

It has actually come down to us in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* that the final testament *[waṣiyya]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) ended with the words: "the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* and 'what your right hands possess.'"[60]

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[58] Since the author has stated explicitly that his remarks refer to both male and female slaves, a parenthetic feminine pronoun may be supplied by the reader after each subsequent occurrence of the third person masculine pronoun, where this refers to the slave.

[59] In the Arabic text, this whole idea is expressed by the single word *yukātibuhu*. The verb *kātaba*, with the object-pronoun *-hu*, means 'he made a written contract with him, to the effect that he [the slave] should pay a certain sum as the price of himself, and on the payment thereof be free.' The term for the contract itself is *mukātaba*, while the master is called the *mukātib*, and the slave is the *mukātab*.

[60] 'What your right hands possess *[mā malakat aimānukum]*'—meaning 'your slaves'—is an expression occurring frequently in the Qur'ān. For instance:

> And those of your slaves *[mimmā malakat aimānukum]* who seek emancipation, contract with them accordingly *[fa-kātibūhum]*, if you are aware of something good in them, and give them some of the wealth of Allāh that He has given you. (24:33)

On carrying a copy of the Qur᾽ān *[muṣḥaf]* when traveling in territory controlled by the enemies of Islām.

It is considered inappropriate to carry a copy of the Qur᾽ān *[muṣḥaf]* when embarking on an expedition into territory controlled by the enemy, because there is a risk of its falling into the hands of those who attribute partners to Allāh *[al-mushrikūn]*.[61]

This does not apply when the Muslims are [on the move] in conspicuous strength and might, and represent an overwhelming force. It then becomes permissible to take a copy of the Book along on the journey, so that the traveler may read from it and and not become forgetful of the Qur᾽an.

* * *

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[61] For an earlier mention of this same point, see p. 94 above.

On what to say when looking in the mirror.

When looking in the mirror, it is commendable to say:

Praise be to Allāh, who has	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi'lladhī*
shaped my body	*sawwā*
in fine proportion,	*khalqī*
and beautified my outer form,	*wa aḥsana ṣūratī*
and embellished in me what	*wa zāna minnī mā shāna*
He has blemished in others.	*min ghairī.*

[These words are appropriate] because they have been handed down to us from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

On what to say when one's ear is buzzing.

When a person experiences a buzzing sensation in his ear, he should pronounce a benediction upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), then say:

May Allāh remember anyone who speaks well of me!	*dhakara'llāhu man dhakaranī bi-khair*.

[This expression is appropriate] because it has been handed down to us from the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

⁂

On what a person needs to say when he or his brother is suffering from bodily aches and pains.

When a person is suffering from aches and pains in his body or his limbs, he should follow the example of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who is reported as having said:

> If someone amongst you is suffering from some ailment, or if it is a brother of his who has something to complain about, let him say:

Our Lord, Allāh,	*Rabbanā—Allāhu'lladhī*
who art in heaven	*fi's-samā':*
hallowed be Thy Name!	*taqaddasa'smuk.*
Thy commandment reigns	*amruka fi's-samā'i*
in heaven and earth,	*wa'l-arḍ:*
as Thy mercy reigns	*kamā raḥmatuka*
in heaven and earth.	*fi's-samā'i wa'l-arḍ.*
Forgive us our sins	*ighfir lanā ḥūbanā*
and our mistakes,	*wa khaṭāyānā*
O Lord of All the Worlds!	*yā Rabba'l-'ālamīn.*
Send down a mercy	*anzil raḥmatan*
from Thy mercy,	*min raḥmatika*
and a healing	*wa shifā'an*
from Thy healing,	*min shifā'ika*
upon the ailment	*'ala'l-waja'i*
that is causing him pain.	*'lladhi bih.*

The person concerned may thus be restored to good health, with the permission of Allāh (Exalted is He).

◆

On what to say at the sight of an evil omen.

If a person sees something which he interprets as an evil omen *[yataṭayyaru minhu]*, he should say:

O Allāh, no one produces	*Allāhumma lā ya'tī*
good things except You,	*bi'l-ḥasanāti illā Anta*
and no one takes away	*wa lā yadhhabu*
bad things except You, and	*bi's-sayyi'āti illā Anta*
there is neither any power nor	*wa lā ḥawla*
any strength except with Allāh.	*wa lā quwwata illā bi'llāh.*

[These words are suitable for such an occasion,] because they have been handed down to us from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

On what to say on hearing the noise of thunder and lightning, and when a strong wind blows.

When a person hears the crash of thunder and [sees] flashes of lightning, he should say:

O Allāh, do not slay us	*Allāhumma lā taqtulnā*
with Your wrath,	*bi-ghaḍabika*
and do not destroy us	*wa lā tuhliknā*
with Your punishment,	*bi-ʿadhābika*
but grant us security	*wa ʿāfinā*
before that (could happen)!	*qabla dhālik.*

When a person feels the wind blowing, he should say:

O Allāh, I ask You for	*Allāhumma innī*
the good of it,	*asʾaluka khairahā*
and for the good of what	*wa khaira*
it has been sent to convey.	*mā ursilat bih.*
And I take refuge with You	*wa aʿūdhu bika*
from the evil of it,	*min sharrihā*
and from the evil of what	*wa min sharri*
it has been sent to convey.	*mā ursilat bih.*

some barrier intervenes between him and them, such as a door or a wall.

If a person reencounters a man he has already greeted once, he should salute him again.

The greeting should not be offered to those who are involved in sins of disobedience *[maʿāṣī]*, for instance by someone who happens upon a group of people playing chess *[shaṭranj]* and backgammon *[nard]*, drinking wine, playing games with walnuts and placing bets *[qimār]*. If they salute him first, however, he should return their greeting, unless he has good reason to believe that they may be shamed out of their sinful activities by his refusal to respond, in which case he should withhold his response.

A Muslim should not avoid his brother's company on more than three occasions in a row, unless the person concerned is one of those who are guilty of heretical innovations *[bidaʿ]*, serious error and sins of disobedience, for permanent avoidance of such types is the recommended course. By offering the greeting *[salām]*, one is saved from the sin *[ithm]* of shunning a fellow Muslim.

The Muslim is also recommended to shake hands *[muṣāḥafa]* with his brother. If he has initiated the handshake, he should not withdraw his hand until the other withdraws his.

It is permissible [for Muslim brothers] to hug each other, and to kiss each other on the head and the hand, as a request for blessing *[tabarruk]* and an expression of pious devotion *[tadayyun]*. Kissing on the mouth, however, is considered reprehensible *[makrūh]*.

⁂

At the first sighting of the new moon *[hilāl]*, one should say:

O Allāh, let it shine	*Allāhumma ahillahu*
upon us with the light	*ʿalainā*
of good fortune and faith,	*bi'l-yumni wa'l-īmāni*
of salvation and submission.	*wa's-salāmati wa'l-islām.*

◆

On what to say at the sight of someone who has been smitten with an affliction *[mubtalā]*.

If a person happens to see someone who has been smitten with an affliction *[mubtalā]*, he should say:

Praise be to Allāh,	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi'lladhī*
who has exempted me	*'āfānī*
from the affliction He has	*mimma'btalāka*
caused you to bear,	*bihi*
and has accorded me	*wa faḍḍalanī*
preferential treatment over you	*'alaika*
and over so many	*wa 'alā kathīrin mimman*
of those He has created.	*khalaqa tafḍīlā.*

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will then exempt him from that affliction, whatever it may be, for as long as he lives.

⁂

On what to say to the returning pilgrim *[ḥājj]*.

To the pilgrim one should say, when he arrives back home from his journey:

May Allāh accept	*taqabbala'llāhu*
your rites of pilgrimage,	*nusukak:*
and may Allāh grant you	*wa aʿẓama'llāhu*
a mighty spiritual reward,	*ajrak:*
and may He reimburse	*wa akhlafa*
your expenses!	*nafaqatak.*

[These words are particularly appropriate] because we know from traditional report that ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to offer this greeting.

Appendix 2

The sects that have gone astray.

The following traditional reports provide us with our basic information concerning the sects *[firaq]* that have gone astray from the path of right guidance:

According to a report from Kathīr ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn ʿAmr ibn ʿAwf, on the authority of his father, who heard it from his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the latter stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> You must follow the exemplary traditional practices *[sunan]* of those who have gone before you, by treading in their very footsteps. You must take exactly the same course as the one they took, inch by inch, cubit by cubit, span by span, to the extent that if they had ever entered a lizard's lair, you would enter it too.
>
> What happened in the case of the Children of Israel was that they split up, in spite of Moses, into seventy-one sects, each and every one of them in error, apart from one solitary exception, namely the party *[firqa]* of Islām and their community *[jamāʿa]*.
>
> Then they split up again, in spite of Jesus, son of Mary, into seventy-two sects, each and every one of them in error apart from one solitary exception, namely the party of Islām and their community.
>
> What will happen next is that you [Muslims] will split up into seventy-three sects, every one of them in error, apart from one solitary exception, namely the party of Islām and their community.

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted by ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Jubair ibn Nufair, on the authority of his father, who passed it on from ʿAwf ibn Mālik al-Ashjaʿī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the latter said that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> My Community *[Umma]* will split up into seventy-three sects, and the sect that will cause the greatest mischief for my Community will be the one made up of people who use their own subjective opinion *[raʾy]* as the standard by which to assess affairs. They will declare what is lawful to be illegal *[yuḥarrimūna'l-ḥalāl]*, and they will legitimize that which is unlawful *[yuḥallilūna'l-ḥarām]*.

We have it on the authority of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Zaid that the following words of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) were reported by ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

> The Children of Israel split up into seventy-one sects, each and every one of them in the Fire of Hell, apart from one solitary exception. My own Community will eventually split up into seventy-three sects, each and every one of them in the Fire of Hell, apart from one solitary exception.

When they asked: "Which is that one solitary exception?" he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Those who are about what I and my Companions are about.[1]

This splitting up into sects, which was predicted by the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace), did not occur in his own lifetime, nor yet during the period [covered by the Caliphates] of Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān and ʿAlī (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with them all). It happened only after the lapse of many years and decades, with the passing of the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* and the Successors *[Tābiʿūn]*, the seven jurists *[fuqahāʾ]* known as the Jurists of Medina, and the learned scholars *[ʿulamāʾ]* and jurists of the great provincial cities *[amṣār]*,[2] generation after generation. As these worthy people died out, true knowledge *[ʿilm]* was taken beyond the reach of all but a very few, a tiny band who were to become the only group saved from damnation *[al-firqa an-nājiya]*, and through whom Allāh would keep the religion *[dīn]* intact. It all turned out just as Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had said it would, in the words transmitted by way of ʿUrwa on the authority of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

> Allāh (Exalted is He) will not remove knowledge from the breasts of men after He has given it to them. What He will do instead is take away the learned scholars. Each time He takes away a learned scholar, He will be taking away the knowledge that was in his possession, until the only people left are those who know nothing at all. These people will therefore be in error themselves, and they will also lead others astray.

According to a differently worded version, transmitted by ʿUrwa on the authority of his father, it is reported that ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

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[1] *man kāna ʿalā mithli mā ana wa aṣḥābī ʿalaih*.

[2] The *amṣār* were the regional capitals established in places like Kūfa and Basra, in the wake of the rapid expansion of Islām beyond the confines of Arabia.

> Allāh (Exalted is He) will not remove knowledge by snatching it directly away from the people at large, but He will take knowledge away by taking away the learned scholars. Eventually, when there is not a single learned scholar left, the people will accept ignorant men as their leaders. When they are asked to give advice [on questions of Islamic religious law], they will issue pronouncements *[aftaw]*[3] without knowledge, so they will be in error themselves and they will also lead others astray.

This next report has been handed down to us from Kathīr ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn ʿAwf, on the authority of his father, who stated that his grandfather attributed the following words to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The religion *[dīn]* will surely wriggle back home to the Ḥijāz,[4] just as a snake wriggles home to its lair. Within the Ḥijāz, the religion will then most certainly take refuge in the inaccessible stronghold at the peak of Mount Arwiya.[5] The religion first appeared as a stranger in exile *[gharīb]*, and it will go back to being a stranger in exile once again, so may blessings abound for the strangers in exile *[fa-ṭūbā li'l-ghurabā']*!

When someone asked: "Who are the strangers in exile?" he responded by saying (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Those who will repair the damage done to my exemplary practice *[sunnatī]* by those who come after me.

In a report that has been handed down to us on the authority of ʿIkrima, Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is quoted as having said: "Never will there come a period of time in which people do not kill off a traditional practice *[sunna]* and bring an heretical innovation *[bidʿa]* to life."

We learn from a report transmitted by al-Ḥārith that ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had been speaking about disruptive temptations *[fitan]*,[6] so we asked him: 'What is the way of escape from them, O Messenger of Allāh?' To this Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied:

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[3] The verb *aftā*, of which *aftaw* is the plural form, has acquired the technical meaning: "to give a formal legal opinion [on a question relating to Islamic law]." The corresponding participle is *muftin [al-muftī]*, a word which has entered the English language as "mufti." The noun *fatwā*, derived from the same root (*f–t–u* or *f–t–y*), is the technical term for a formal legal opinion on a point of Islamic law, delivered by a competent authority.

[4] The Ḥijāz is the province of Arabia in which Mecca and Medina are situated.

[5] A mountain said to be forty leagues high.

> 'The Book of Allāh is the Wise Remembrance *[adh-Dhikr al-Ḥakīm]*.[7] It is the Straight Path *[aṣ-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm]*.[8] It is that which tongues do not become confused about. It is that about which the jinn did not stop saying, once they had heard it: "We have indeed heard a marvelous Qur'ān!" (72.1). If a person makes it the basis of the doctrine he chooses to profess, that person will be professing the truth, and if a person makes it the basis on which he rests his judgment, that person will be acting justly.'"

In a report from 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn 'Umar, al-'Irbāḍ ibn Sāriya (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is quoted as having said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had performed the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ]* with us, then he had treated us to an eloquent exhortation *[maw'iẓa]*, which affected us so powerfully that tears streamed from our eyes, our hearts trembled, and our hides were scorched. We felt so moved by it that we said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, it seems like the exhortation of one who is about to take his leave!' He responded to this by saying (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The counsel I bequeath to you is dutiful devotion *[taqwā]* to Allāh, and paying heed and obedience [to your leader], even if he happens to be an Abyssinian slave, for anyone who lives on after me will experience much disharmony.
>
> You must therefore strive to follow my exemplary practice *[sunnatī]*, and the exemplary practice of the rightly guided Caliphs *[sunnat al-khulafā' ar-rāshidīn]* after I am gone. You must hold on to it with a very tight grip, and doggedly sink your teeth into it. You must beware of novel fashions *[muḥdathāt al-umūr]*, for every novelty is an heretical innovation *[bid'a]*, and every heretical innovation is a deviation from the right path."

According to a report transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira

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[6] The Arabic word *fitna*, of which *fitan* is the plural form, covers a wide range of meaning. By extension from the basic concept of "the melting of gold and silver in the fire in order to separate, or distinguish, the bad from the good," it comes to signify "a trial; a temptation; an affliction by which a person is tried, proved, or tested." Then, as in the present context, it may come to mean "the temptation that lures an entire community into discord, dissension, conflict, and even civil war."

[7] As Allāh Himself (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said in the Qur'ān:

> This [which] We recite to you [consists] of signs and wise remembrance *[dhālika natlūhu 'alaika mina'l-āyāti wa'dh-dhikri'l-ḥakīm]*. (3:58)

[8] The Straight Path is mentioned many times in the Qur'ān, notably in the Opening Sūra *[al-Fātiḥa]*, which contains the prayer:

> Guide us in the Straight Path *[ihdina'ṣ-Ṣirāṭa'l-Mustaqīm]*. (1:5)

(may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Whenever a person summons other people to take the path of right guidance, and finds followers, he will be entitled to the same reward as those who follow his lead, though nothing will be subtracted from their rewards. And whenever a person summons other people to take the way of error, and finds followers, he will be subject to the same penalties as those who follow his lead, though nothing will be subtracted from the penalties incurred by them.

contain the water]. Then he ordered him to take it and pour it over his [Abū Umāma's] head, whereupon the vessel was tipped over him from behind, as far as I could tell. Then he instructed him to drink a few sips from it, which he did. Then he rode away in company."

Provided the offender has washed himself thoroughly by performing a complete ablution, and has then poured the water over the victim of the evil eye *[maʿīn]*, he will have accomplished [everything required of him].

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are made up of six distinct sects. The Murji'a account for twelve sects, and the Shī'a for no fewer than thirty-two. The Jahmiyya, the Najjāriyya, the Ḍirāriyya and the Kullābiyya represent only one sect each, while the Mushabbiha are made up of three sects. This gives us the grand total of seventy-three sects, which tallies exactly with the reported statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

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On the People of the Sunna *[Ahl as-Sunna]* as the only group saved from damnation *[al-firqat an-nājiya]*, and on the derogatory names applied to them by certain other groups and sects.

As for the one group that is saved from damnation *[al-firqat an-nājiya]*, it is the People of the Sunna and the Community *[Ahl as-Sunna wa'l-Jamāʿa]*. We have already explained their doctrine and system of belief in previous discussions.[16]

The Qadariyya[17] and the Muʿtazila apply the label "Compulsives"[18] *[Mujbara]* to the members of this group that is saved from damnation, because the latter maintain that all products of creation *[makhlūqāt]* are entirely dependent on the volition *[mashīʾa]*, the power *[qudra]*, the will *[irāda]* and the creativity *[khalq]* of Allāh (Exalted is He).

The Murjiʾa prefer to call them "Skeptics" *[Shakkākiyya]*, because of their hesitant attitude to faith *[li'stithnāʾihim fi'l-īmān]*,[19] deduced from the fact that anyone who belongs to this group will say: "I am a believer *[muʾmin]*, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills *[inshāʾa'llāhu taʿālā]*," as we have previously explained at some length.[20]

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[16] See pp. 171–279 above.

[17] It is interesting to note that the Qadariyya [the proponents of human *qadar* or free will] are not included in the author's list of the ten basic sectarian divisions. For earlier references to the Qadariyya and their doctrines, see pp. 214, 217, 232, 273 and 277 above.

[18] One might hazard the free translation "Zombies" or "Robots" to convey the sense of the term in this context. For an earlier reference to the Mujbara [also known as the Jabariyya], see p. 273 above. In the context of the Islamic law of marriage, the term *mujbara* is applied to a woman whose guardian is authorized to give her in marriage even without her explicit consent (see p. 126 above).

[19] The literal meaning of *istithnāʾ* is "making an exception or conditional reservation." It is sometimes used specifically to mean "making a statement with the reservation 'if Allāh so wills *[in shāʾa'llāh]*.'"

[20] See p. 210 above, where the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) says *inter alia*: "It is not permissible for the believer to say: 'I am a believer, as a matter of fact *[ana muʾmin—haqqan]*.' Instead, what he ought to say is: 'I am a believer, if Allāh so wills *[ana muʾmin—in shāʾa'llāh]*.' This is contrary to the doctrine of the Muʿtazila, who maintain that it is quite permissible for the believer to say: 'I am a believer, as a matter of fact *[ana muʾmin—haqqan]*.' "Our own statement on the subject is based on the traditional report according to which ʿUmar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: 'If someone claims that he is a believer *[muʾmin]*, he is actually an unbeliever *[kāfir]*.'"

The Rāfiḍa[21] call the People of the Sunna "Imām-makers" *[Nāṣibiyya]*, because they profess the doctrine which calls for the election *[ikhtiyār]* of the Imām and his installation *[naṣb]* in office on terms of accountability *[bi'l-'aqd]*.

The Jahmiyya and the Najjāriyya call them "Anthropomorphists" *[Mushabbiha]* because they affirm the reality of the attributes *[ṣifāt]* of the Maker *[al-Bārī]* (Almighty and Glorious is He), such as Knowledge *['Ilm]*, Power *[Qudra]* and Life *[Ḥayāt]*, as well as other attributes.

The Bāṭiniyya[22] call them "Trash Collectors" *[Ḥashwiyya]*,[23] because they maintain the authenticity of the *akhbār* [traditional reports handed down from the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace)] and attach importance to the *āthār* [traditional reports handed down from the Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them all)].

As we have explained, however, the only proper appellation for them is "Adherents of the Tradition *[Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth]* and People of the Sunna *[Ahl as-Sunna]*."

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[21] For earlier references to the Rāfiḍa/Rawāfiḍ, see pp. 262 and 278 above.

[22] The Bāṭiniyya [Esotericists] are so called because of the emphasis they place on the inner *[bāṭin]* or spiritual meaning of the Qur'ān, as opposed to the exoteric or material meaning. The name has been applied to a variety of sects, including some of the more extreme groups among the Shī'a.

[23] For an earlier reference to the Ḥashwiyya, see p. 277 above.

On the doctrines of the Khawārij and the fifteen sects derived from them.

The Khawārij are known by several names and nicknames. They came to be called the Khawārij ["the Seceders" or "the Rebels"] because of their rebellion *[khurūj]* against ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

They have been called the Ḥukmiyya, because of their refusal to accept the authority of the two arbitrators *[ḥakamain]*, Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī and ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), and because of their war cry: "The decision belongs to Allāh alone *[lā ḥukma illā li'llāh]*; the two arbitrators have no power to decide!"[24]

They have also been called the Ḥarūriyya, because they set up camp in Ḥarūrā', which is a place [not far from Kūfa].[25]

Yet another name that has been given to them is "the Vendors" *[Shurāt]*, because of their assertion: "We have sold our own selves for the sake of Allāh's cause *[sharainā anfusanā fi'llāh]*,"[26] or in other words: "We have traded them in exchange for Allāh's spiritual reward and His good pleasure."

They are sometimes referred to as "the Defectors"[27] *[Māriqa]*, because of their defection *[murūq]* from the religion *[dīn]*. They were actually described by the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace) as people who would swerve away from the religion, just as the [hunter's] arrow may swerve away from the animal target, and who would not come back to the fold. Such indeed are they, for they have swerved away from the religion and from Islām. They have separated themselves off from the religious community *[milla]*, breaking loose from it and from the loyal congregation *[jamā'a]*. They have gone astray from the level course of right guidance and from the true path *[sabīl]*.

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[24] The Ḥukmiyya are sometimes referred to as the Muhakkima, which is simply a participial form derived from the same root, *ḥ–k–m*, and which means "those who repeated the slogan *lā ḥukma*...."

[25] They withdrew to the village of Ḥarūrā' after they had deserted the army of ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), in protest against his appointment of a human tribunal—instead of relying on the Word of Allāh in the Qur'ān—to settle the violent dispute over the rightful leadership of the Muslim community.

[26] This is clearly an allusion to the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) in the Qur'ānic verse:

> And there are some among mankind who would sell their own selves, seeking the good pleasure of Allāh. (2:207)

[27] Other possible translations of the term *Māriqa* include: "Apostates, Renegades, Turncoats, Deserters."

They have withdrawn their allegiance from the ruling authority *[sulṭān]*, and they have unsheathed the sword against the rightful leaders *[a'imma]*,[28] whose blood they consider it permissible to shed, and whose property they consider it lawful to confiscate. They have branded all who oppose them as unbelievers *[kaffarū man khālafahum]*. They dare to heap curses on the Companions *[Aṣḥāb]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and on his Helpers *[Anṣār]*.[29] They wash their hands of them, haughtily dismiss them as guilty of unbelief *[kufr]* and terrible sins *['aẓā'im]*, and consider it right and proper to contradict them.

They do not believe in the torment of the tomb *['adhāb al-qabr]*, nor in the Basin *[Ḥawḍ]*,[30] nor in the right of intercession *[shafā'a]*.[31] They offer no one any prospect of deliverance from the Fire of Hell, and they profess the doctrine that if someone tells a single lie, or commits a sin of any kind, whether it be trivial or serious, and if he then dies without repentance, that person will be counted as an unbeliever *[kāfir]*, and will be condemned to remain in the Fire of Hell for all eternity.

They do not regard the congregational prayer *[jamā'a]* as valid unless it is performed behind their own Imām, but they do regard it as valid to postpone the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* beyond its prescribed time, to begin the fast *[ṣawm]* before the sighting of the new moon [of the month of Ramaḍān], and to break the fast *[fiṭr]* in like manner [before the end of Ramaḍān has been established by the sighting of the new moon of Shawwāl]. They also admit the validity of a marriage contracted without the participation of a marriage guardian *[walī]*.[32] They accept

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[28] Plural of *imām*.

[29] See note 253 on p. 225 above.

[30] See pp. 237–38 above.

[31] See pp. 232–35 above.

[32] As the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained on p. 126 above, the orthodox Islamic law of marriage requires that the bride be represented by her legally qualified marriage guardian *[al-waliyy al-'adl]*.

"He replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> 'You must work, since everyone receives help [from Allāh] in order to accomplish the purpose for which he was created *[fa-kullun muyassarun limā khuliqa lah]*.'"

It has been reported that Sālim ibn 'Abdi'llāh was told by his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "O Messenger of Allāh, how do you view the work in which we are engaged? Is it something that has already been settled [by Divine preordination], or is it something in which there is scope for innovation and originality?"[249]

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied: "It has already been settled." 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) then asked: "Does that mean there is nothing we can do but trust?" To this he replied (blessing and peace be upon him):

> You must work, O Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, since everyone receives help [from Allāh] in order to accomplish the purpose for which he was created. If a person is one of the people of good fortune *[ahl as-sa'āda]*, he must therefore work for the sake of prosperity, and if a person is one of the people of misfortune *[ahl ash-shaqāwa]*, he must work on account of adversity.

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[249] *a-shai'un qad furigha minh—au shai'un mubtada'un au mubtada'.*

peace) and said: 'I wish to fight in the holy war *[jihād]*.' In answer to the question, 'Are your parents still living?' the man said, 'Yes,' so the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: 'Well then, theirs is the cause for which you must engage in combat!'"

The nature of filial piety *[birr]* is such that it requires all of the following:

1. That you provide in sufficient measure whatever your parents may need.
2. That you keep them out of harm's way.
3. That you treat them with gentle familiarity, as you would treat a little child.
4. That you do not get irritated with them, or with their needs.
5. That you regard service to them as a substitute *[badal]* for many of your supererogatory acts of worship *[nawāfil]*, such as the extra ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* and fasting *[ṣiyām]* you would otherwise be free to perform.
6. That you seek forgiveness [from Allāh] on their behalf, immediately after your ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*.
7. That you make it unnecessary for them to engage in weary toil, or to bear their troubles without support.
8. That you do not raise your own voice above their voices.
9. That you do not go against their wishes in anything, as long as this does not entail any violation of the sacred law *[kharq ash-shar']*.

What is meant by this last point is that obedience to parents cannot go so far as to include the abandonment of obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]*, such as the testimony of Islām *[ḥujjat al-islām]*, the five ritual prayers *[aṣ-ṣalāwāt al-khams]*, payment of the alms-due *[zakāt]*, an act of atonement *[kaffāra]* or the fulfillment of a solemn vow *[nadhr]*. It cannot be stretched to include the committing of any unlawful act *[irtikāb muḥarram]*, in violation of such rules as those that prohibit sexual misconduct *[zinā]*, the drinking of wine *[shurb al-khamr]*, murder *[qatl]*, slanderous accusation *[qadhf]*,[75] and the misappropriation of goods, examples of which are forcible seizure *[ghaṣb]* and theft *[sariqa]*.

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[75] In Islamic law, the term *qadhf* usually refers specifically to an accusation of adultery *[zinā]*, directed against a virtuous man or woman by a person who is unable to produce four reputable witnesses. The penalty incurred by making such an accusation is eighty lashes.

3. The Fudakiyya, historically related to Ibn Fudaik.[39]
4. The ʿAṭawiyya, who can be traced back to ʿAṭiyya ibn al-Aswad.
5. The ʿAjārida, historically related to ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAjrad. They actually represent a composite grouping of many subsects, collectively known as the Maimūniyya. They consider it permissible for a man to marry the daughters of his sons and the daughters of his daughters, as well as the daughters of his brothers and the daughters of his sisters. They also maintain that the chapter entitled "Joseph" *[Sūrat Yūsuf]* is not really part of the Qurʾān.[40]
6. The Jāzimiyya. Peculiar to this sect is the doctrine that friendliness *[walāya]* and hostility *[ʿadāwa]* are a pair of attributes applicable to His Essence (Exalted is He). The Jāzimiyya can otherwise be regarded as a branch of the Maʿlūmiyya, since they maintain that anyone who does not know Allāh by His Names is an ignorant person. They refuse to accept the doctrine that actions *[afʿāl]* belong to Allāh (Exalted is He) in terms of creation, and that the ability to act is brought into being simultaneously with the action itself *[al-istiṭāʿa maʿaʾl-fiʿl]*.
7. The Majhūliyya, who constitute one of the fifteen basic groups [of the Khawārij]. They are proponents of the doctrine that if someone knows Allāh by at least some of His Names, he is to be considered as having knowledge *[ʿālim]* of Him, not as a totally ignorant person *[jāhil]*.
8. The Ṣaltiyya, who are historically related to ʿUthmān ibn aṣ-Ṣalt. They maintain that if a person has an infant child at the time when he responds to our call and embraces Islām, that child cannot be regarded as a Muslim until he reaches the age of puberty, at which time he must be invited to enter Islām and must accept the invitation on his own behalf.
9. The Akhnasiyya, who trace the origin of their name to a man called al-Akhnas.[41] They hold the opinion that the slave-owner may take for himself part of the alms *[zakāt]* due to his slave, and pass

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[39] A contemporary of Najda ibn ʿĀmir, mentioned above as eponym of the Najadāt. (See also note [35].)

[40] In the article cited in note [36] above, G. Levi della Vida offers the following explanation: "The same Puritanism which characterises Khāridjism in its conception of the state and of faith is found in its ethical principles: it demands purity of conscience as an indispensable complement to bodily purity for the validity of acts of worship; one of their sects goes so far as to remove Sūra xii. (*Sūrat Yūsuf*) from the Qurʾān because its contents are worldly and frivolous and make it unworthy to be the Word of God."

[41] The adjective *akhnas* means "pugnosed."

on to him only part of his alms, if he [the slave-owner] is needy and impoverished.[42]

10. The Ẓafariyya.

11. The Ḥafṣiyya, a sectarian group *[ṭā'ifa]* that branched off from the Ẓafariyya. They maintain that as long as a person acknowledges Allāh, he cannot be considered guilty of polytheism or idolatry *[shirk]*, even if he does not believe in anything else in the religion apart from Him, such as a Messenger *[Rasūl]*, a Garden of Paradise and a Fire of Hell, even if he perpetrates all the most heinous crimes, such as homicide, and even if he regards it as lawful to commit adultery and fornication *[zinā]*. According to them, a person can be considered guilty of *shirk* only if he is ignorant of Allāh and refuses to recognize His existence, and on no other grounds at all.

They also maintain that the "one lured to bewilderment *[ḥairān]*," who is mentioned by Allāh (Exalted is He) in the Qur'ān, is none other than 'Alī, along with his party and his companions, "who call him to guidance, [saying]: 'Come to us!'"[43]

These are the people [who fought against 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) in the battle] of Nahrawān.[44]

12. The Ibāḍiyya [or Abāḍiyya].[45] They maintain that every religious duty which Allāh (Exalted is He) has made incumbent upon His creatures must be treated as an article of faith *[īmān]*, and that every major sin is an instance of ingratitude for divine blessings *[kufr ni'ma]*, not of polytheistic misbelief *[kufr shirk]*.

13. The Bahnasiyya, historically related to Abū Bahnas, have adopted a doctrine peculiar to themselves, since they maintain a man cannot be

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[42] For the author's account of the orthodox rules governing the collection and distribution of the alms-due, see pp. 17–19 above.

[43] The reference here is to the following verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān:

> Say: "Shall we cry, instead of to Allāh, to that which neither profits us nor hurts us, and shall we turn back on our heels after Allāh has guided us, like one lured to bewilderment in the earth by the devils, while he has friends who call him to guidance, [saying]: 'Come to us!'?" Say: "The guidance of Allāh is the true guidance, and we are commanded to surrender to the Lord of All the Worlds." (6:71)

[44] In this battle, fought in A.H. 38/658 C.E., 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) attacked the Khawārij in their camp and inflicted a terrible defeat upon them.

[45] The Ibāḍiyya have survived to the present day. They still maintain significant communities, adhering to their own theological doctrines and their own school of Islamic law, on the island of Zanzibar and the neighboring coast of East Africa, in 'Umān in the southeastern corner of the Arabian peninsula, and in parts of North Africa (Tripolitania and Southern Algeria). According to their own contemporary scholars, the form *Ibāḍiyya* is the more correct version of their name.

considered a Muslim until he knows everything that Allāh has made lawful to him, and everything that He has made unlawful to him, specifically and personally.

There are some among the Bahnasiyya who say that if a person commits a sinful offense, he should not be treated as an unbeliever until he has been arraigned before the Sulṭān, so that the latter may impose upon him the penalty [prescribed by the sacred law for his particular offense], and that only then should he be convicted of unbelief *[kufr]*.

14. The Shimrākhiyya trace the origin of their name to ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ash-Shimrākh, who declared that the killing of one's own parents is a lawful act *[ḥalāl]*. At the time when he made this assertion, however, he was under duress or threat of injury *[fī dār at-taqiyya]*,[46] so the Khawārij were able to wash their hands of him.

15. The Bidaʿiyya. Their doctrines generally coincide with those of the Azāriqa. Peculiar to them alone, however, is the assertion that the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* should consist of only two cycles *[rakʿatān]* not only in the morning, but also in the evening, on the strength of [their interpretation of] the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> And perform the prayer at the two ends of the day and in some watches of the night;[47] surely the good deeds will drive away the evil deeds. (11:114)

They are in agreement with the Azāriqa on the permissibility of taking women captives from among the unbelievers *[kuffār]*, and of killing their infant children inadvertently, on the strength of [their interpretation of] the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> [And Noah said: "My Lord,] do not leave upon the earth even one of the unbelievers." (71:26)

All the sects of the Khawārij are in full accord when it comes to holding ʿAlī guilty of unbelief *[kufr]* on account of his decision to resort to the appointment of arbitrators *[taḥkīm]*. They are also in unanimous agreement on the imputation of unbelief to the perpetrator of a major sin *[kufr murtakib kabīra]*, with the exception of the Najadāt, who do not subscribe to this doctrine.

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[46] Literally, "in the domain of caution." *Taqiyya* is the technical term for the dispensation from the normal requirements of religion, which is available to a Muslim under duress or threat of injury. In his commentary on the Qurānic verse (16:106): "Whoever disbelieves in Allāh, after he has believed—excepting him who has been compelled, and his heart is still at rest in his belief...," at-Ṭabarī explains: "If a person is subject to compulsion, and professes unbelief with his tongue, while his heart contradicts him, to escape his enemies, no blame falls on him, because Allāh takes His servants as their hearts believe."

[47] *wa aqimi'ṣ-ṣalāta ṭarafayi'n-nahāri wa zulafan mina'l-lail.*

on to him only part of his alms, if he [the slave-owner] is needy and impoverished.[42]

10. The Ẓafariyya.

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They also maintain that the "one lured to bewilderment *[ḥairān]*," who is mentioned by Allāh (Exalted is He) in the Qur'ān, is none other than 'Alī, along with his party and his companions, "who call him to guidance, [saying]: 'Come to us!'"[43]

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[45] The Ibāḍiyya have survived to the present day. They still maintain significant communities, adhering to their own theological doctrines and their own school of Islamic law, on the island of Zanzibar and the neighboring coast of East Africa, in 'Umān in the southeastern corner of the Arabian peninsula, and in parts of North Africa (Tripolitania and Southern Algeria). According to their own contemporary scholars, the form *Ibāḍiyya* is the more correct version of their name.

Also included among them are the Ghāliya [Extremists], so called because of their excessively fanatical devotion *[ghuluww]* to ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), and due to the fact that they improperly ascribed to him certain attributes of Lordship *[rubūbiyya]* and Prophethood *[nubuwwa]*.

The names of the authors who compiled their textbooks are: Hishām ibn Ḥakam, ʿAlī ibn Manṣūr, Abu'l-Aḥwaṣ, al-Ḥusain ibn Saʿīd, al-Faḍl ibn Shādhān, Abū ʿĪsā al-Warrāq, Ibn ar-Rāwandī and al-Manījī. Their most numerous concentrations are to be found in the cities of Qum and Qāshān [in Īrān] and in the districts of Idrīs and Kūfa [in ʿIrāq].

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On what to say when looking in the mirror.

When looking in the mirror, it is commendable to say:

Praise be to Allāh, who has	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi'lladhī*
shaped my body	*sawwā*
in fine proportion,	*khalqī*
and beautified my outer form,	*wa aḥsana ṣūratī*
and embellished in me what	*wa zāna minnī mā shāna*
He has blemished in others.	*min ghairī*.

[These words are appropriate] because they have been handed down to us from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

contain the water]. Then he ordered him to take it and pour it over his [Abū Umāma's] head, whereupon the vessel was tipped over him from behind, as far as I could tell. Then he instructed him to drink a few sips from it, which he did. Then he rode away in company."

Provided the offender has washed himself thoroughly by performing a complete ablution, and has then poured the water over the victim of the evil eye *[maʿīn]*, he will have accomplished [everything required of him].

that is yet to be, in matters of both worldly and religious concern, down to the number of all the pebbles, all the drops of rain, and all the leaves on the trees.

5. That the Imāms are personally capable of producing miracles *[mu'jizāt]*, just like the Prophets *[anbiyā']* (peace be upon them).

6. According to the doctrine professed by the majority of the *Rāfiḍa*, anyone who wages war against 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) must be a disbeliever *[kāfir]* in Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). Other doctrines of theirs have been mentioned elsewhere.

Let us now consider the teachings peculiar to each of the subsects:

1. The Ghāliya [Extremists]. They make the claim that 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is the most excellent of the Prophets (may the blessings of Allāh be upon them all). They also claim that he does not lie buried in the earth like all the rest of the Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them), but that he is up there in the clouds, fighting His enemies (Exalted is He) above the clouds, and that he (may Allāh ennoble his countenance) will return at the end of the age, to rid the earth of his haters and foes. They claim that 'Alī and the rest of the Imāms have never died. They insist that they will continue to survive until the Final Hour is at hand, and that death has no way of gaining access to them.

They also claim that 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is a Prophet *[nabī]*, and that Gabriel (peace be upon him) made a mistake in failing to deliver the Divinely inspired revelation *[waḥy]* to him. They have gone so far as to claim that 'Alī was a god *[ilāh]*.

May they be subjected to the curse of Allāh, of His angels, and of all the rest of His creatures, until the Day of Judgment! May He eradicate all trace of them. May He destroy them root and branch. May He leave them no place on earth in which to dwell, because they have gone far beyond all acceptable bounds in their wildly heretical extravagance.

They have carried their rebellion to the point of unbelief *[kufr]*. They have abandoned Islām and parted company with faith *[īmān]*. They have repudiated God *[al-Ilāh]*, the Messengers *[Rusul]*, and the revelation of scripture *[tanzīl]*. We must therefore take refuge with Allāh from all those who subscribe to this doctrine.

(a) The Bannāniyya, an offshoot of the Ghāliya. Their name and origin can be traced to Bannān ibn Sam'ān. Their fabrications and futile notions include the doctrine that Allāh (Exalted is He) is shaped in the form of a human being. They have propagated lies about Allāh. Exalted is Allāh, far above and beyond everything of this kind! As He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. (42:11)

(b) The Ṭayyāriyya, another offshoot of the Ghāliya, are related historically to 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mu'āwiya ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn Ja'far aṭ-Ṭayyār. They teach the doctrine of the transmigration of souls *[tanāsukh]*, and maintain that the spirit *[rūḥ]* of Adam (peace be upon him) is the spirit of Allāh, which entered him by way of metempsychosis.

The most extreme of all the Ghāliya are those who teach the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. They maintain that when the spirit is transported back to these earthly realms, after it has left this world because of death, the first stage of its transmigration is into a camel. Then it is transferred into the physical form of the next inferior creature, and so on down the scale, stage by stage, until it takes on the form of the worms and maggots that thrive in human excrement, and of creatures similar to these, at which point it has reached the end of the process of transmigration. Some of them go so far as to maintain that the spirits of disobedient sinners are transformed by metempsychosis into iron, mud and potter's clay, and are then tormented by exposure to the fire and the processes of baking, hammering and smelting, and by the undignified and humiliating handling and treatment they must undergo, as a punishment for the sins they have committed.

(c) The Mughīriyya trace their name origin to Mughīra ibn Sa'd, who laid claim to Prophethood *[nubuwwa]*. He maintained that Allāh is a light in the shape of a man. Among other things, he claimed the ability to bring the dead to life.

(d) The Manṣūriyya take their name from their founder, Abū Manṣūr. He used to assert that he had ascended to heaven, and that the Lord had anointed his head. He maintained that Jesus (peace be upon him) was the first to be created by Allāh, then 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him). He also taught that the Messengers of Allāh will never cease

"He replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> 'You must work, since everyone receives help [from Allāh] in order to accomplish the purpose for which he was created [*fa-kullun muyassarun limā khuliqa lah*].'"

It has been reported that Sālim ibn 'Abdi'llāh was told by his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "O Messenger of Allāh, how do you view the work in which we are engaged? Is it something that has already been settled [by Divine preordination], or is it something in which there is scope for innovation and originality?"[249]

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied: "It has already been settled." 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) then asked: "Does that mean there is nothing we can do but trust?" To this he replied (blessing and peace be upon him):

> You must work, O Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, since everyone receives help [from Allāh] in order to accomplish the purpose for which he was created. If a person is one of the people of good fortune [*ahl as-sa'āda*], he must therefore work for the sake of prosperity, and if a person is one of the people of misfortune [*ahl ash-shaqāwa*], he must work on account of adversity.

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[249] *a-shai'un qad furigha minh—au shai'un mubtada'un au mubtada'.*

as people who would swerve away from the religion, just as the [hunter's] arrow may swerve away from the animal target, and who would not come back to the fold. Such indeed are they, for they have swerved away from the religion and from Islām. They have separated themselves off from the religious community *[milla]*, breaking loose from it and from the loyal congregation *[jamā'a]*. They have gone astray from the level course of right guidance and from the true path *[sabīl]*.

They have withdrawn their allegiance from the ruling authority *[sulṭān]*, and they have unsheathed the sword against the rightful leaders *[a'imma]*,[28] whose blood they consider it permissible to shed, and whose property they consider it lawful to confiscate. They have branded all who oppose them as unbelievers *[kaffarū man khālafahum]*. They dare to heap curses on the Companions *[Aṣḥāb]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and on his Helpers *[Anṣār]*.[29] They wash their hands of them, haughtily dismiss them as guilty of unbelief *[kufr]* and terrible sins *['aẓā'im]*, and consider it right and proper to contradict them.

They do not believe in the torment of the tomb *['adhāb al-qabr]*, nor in the Basin *[Ḥawḍ]*,[30] nor in the right of intercession *[shafā'a]*.[31] They offer no one any prospect of deliverance from the Fire of Hell, and they profess the doctrine that if someone tells a single lie, or commits a sin of any kind, whether it be trivial or serious, and if he then dies without repentance, that person will be counted as an unbeliever *[kāfir]*, and will be condemned to remain in the Fire of Hell for all eternity.

They do not regard the congregational prayer *[jamā'a]* as valid unless it is performed behind their own Imām, but they do regard it as valid to postpone the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* beyond its prescribed time, to begin the fast *[ṣawm]* before the sighting of the new moon [of the month of Ramaḍān], and to break the fast *[fiṭr]* in like manner [before the end of Ramaḍān has been established by the sighting of the new moon of Shawwāl]. They also admit the validity of a marriage contracted without the participation of a marriage guardian *[walī]*.[32] They accept was an error, since neither of them was entitled to take precedence, and that the Muslim community *[umma]* had departed from the most correct course.

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[28] Plural of *imām*.

[29] See note [253] on p. 225 above.

[30] See pp. 237–38 above.

[31] See pp. 232–35 above.

[32] As the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained on p. 126 above, the orthodox Islamic law of marriage requires that the bride be represented by her legally qualified marriage guardian *[al-waliyy al-'adl]*.

(c) As for the Batariyya, their name and origin can be traced to a man who bore the nickname al-Abtar ["The Man Without Offspring"], although his proper name was an-Nawwā'. They maintained that the pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr and ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with them both) was not an error, because ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) had voluntarily abdicated the leadership *[imāra]*.

They have serious reservations about ʿUthmān, and they say: "ʿAlī is an Imām as soon as allegiance has been pledged to him."

(d) As for the Nuʿaimiyya, their name and origin can be traced to Nuʿaim ibn al-Yamān. Their doctrines coincide with those of the Batariyya, except for the fact that they completely washed their hands of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), and accused him of being an unbeliever.

(e) The Yaʿqūbiyya are prepared to accept the Imāmate of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), although they do profess the belief that ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) should really have taken precedence over them both. They reject the doctrine of [ʿAlī's eventual] return *[rajʿa]*. Their name and origin can be traced to a man called Yaʿqūb. There are some among their number who have never accepted Abū Bakr and ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), and who do profess the doctrine of [ʿAlī's eventual] return.[60]

3. The Rāfiḍa [in the narrower sense of the term]. The fourteen[61] subsects that have branched off from this group are the following:

(a) The Qaṭʿiyya [Positivists]. They came to be called by this name on account of their positive certainty *[qaṭʿ]* concerning the death of [the Imām] Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar.[62]

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[60] See above, p. 411.

[61] As in the list on p. 411 above, the subsects mentioned actually add up to more than fourteen—in this case to a total of sixteen. Fourteen of the names occur in both lists, but the ʿAmmāriyya are mentioned only in the first, and the Muʿammariyya and the Zurāriyya only in the second. The most likely explanation would seem to be that additions have been inserted into the text, perhaps by a copyist, at some point subsequent to its original composition.

[62] For previous reference to the Qaṭʿiyya, see p. 411 above.

On the preferability of wearing the signet ring on the left hand and on the little finger.

The preferred practice is to wear the signet ring on the left hand and on the little finger *[khinṣir]*. This is based on the report provided by Abū Dāwūd (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), complete with chain of transmission *[isnād]* going back to Nāfi', according to whom Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) said that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to wear his signet ring on his left hand, with its stone toward the palm of his hand.

The same report has come down to us from most of the righteous forefathers *[as-salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ]*. Besides, noncompliance with this practice is a custom and trademark of those who promote heretical innovations *[al-mubtadi'a]*.

Yet another consideration is the fact that it is proper to take hold of things with the right hand in order to place them in the left hand, so this [practice of wearing the ring on the little finger of the left hand] serves to protect the signet ring itself, as well as the names and letters inscribed upon it.

It has also been reported, on the authority of 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to wear a signet ring on his right hand. It could therefore be maintained that the right and left hands have an equal claim, although the view previously stated is the one preferred.

* * *

(h) The Ismā'īliyya. They maintain that Ja'far is the one who is dead, and that the Imām after him is Ismā'īl. They say that the latter is still reigning [in concealment], and that he is the one who is expected to return [as the Mahdī].

(i) The Qarāmiḍiyya. They accept the regular succession to the Imāmate as far as Ja'far, but then they maintain that Ja'far specifically designated Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl as his successor. They believe that Muḥammad [ibn Ismā'īl] did not die, but is still alive, and that he is the Mahdī.

(j) The Mubārakiyya. They trace their name and origin to their chief, al-Mubārak. They maintain that Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl did in fact die, and that the Imāmate was then passed on to his son.

(k) The Shumaiṭiyya. They are historically related to a chieftain known by the name of Yaḥyā ibn Shumaiṭ. They maintained that the rightful Imām was Ja'far, then Muḥammad ibn Ja'far, and that the office then passed to his [Muḥammad's] son.

(l) The Mu'ammariyya. They are also referred to as the Afṭaḥiyya, because 'Abdu'llāh ibn Ja'far was bandy-legged *[afṭaḥ ar-rijlain]*. They maintain that the next Imām after Ja'far is his son 'Abdu'llāh. They are a very numerous group.

(m) The Maṭmūriyya. They came to acquire this name because they once got into an argument with Yūnus ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, he being a member of the Qaṭ'iyya, the group who are positively convinced of the death of Mūsā ibn Ja'far, and Yūnus happened to say to them: "You are more despicable than the dogs that lurk in subterranean storehouses *[al-kilāb al-maṭmūriyya]*." This nickname has stuck to them ever since.

They are also called the Wāqifa [Steadfast Supporters], because of their steadfast devotion to *[li-wuqūfihim 'alā]* Mūsā ibn Ja'far, and their assertion that he is still alive, that he did not die and will never die, since he is the Mahdī according to their view.

(n) The Mūsawiyya. They came to be so called because of their hesitant attitude toward Mūsā ibn Ja'far, and the fact that they said: "We do not know whether he is dead or whether he is still alive." They also said: "If someone else has a legitimate claim to the Imāmate, put it into effect!"

(o) The Imāmiyya. They accept the regular succession to the Imāmate as far as Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusain, whom they regard as the righteous leader who is expected to reemerge one day from mysterious concealment *[al-qā'im al-muntaẓar]*, in order to fill the earth with justice, as it has been filled with tyrannical oppression.

(p) The Zurāriyya. They are the companions of Zurāra. They make the same claim [on behalf of 'Abdu'llāh ibn Ja'far] as that made by the Mu'ammariyya.

It has been said, however, that Zurāra himself abandoned their doctrine, because he once asked 'Abdu'llāh ibn Ja'far about certain problems, and he did not know the answers, so Zurāra transferred his support to Mūsā ibn Ja'far.

The legal and theological doctrines of the Rawāfiḍ have sometimes been likened to those of Judaism *[al-Yahūdiyya]*. As ash-Sha'bī has expressed it: "The emotional attachment *[maḥabba]* of the Rawāfiḍ is the emotional attachment of the Jews."

The Jews have maintained that the Imāmate [the leadership of the Jewish community] cannot rightfully belong to anyone except a man from the family of David, while the Rāfiḍa have insisted that the Imāmate [the leadership of the Islāmic community] cannot rightfully belong to anyone except a man from among the offspring of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib.

[The following similarities are also worthy of note:]

- Doctrine of the Jews: There can be no sacred struggle *[jihād]* in the cause of Allāh until the False Messiah *[al-Masīḥ ad-Dajjāl]* emerges on the earthly scene, descending by some means from the sky. Doctrine of the Rāfiḍa: There can be no sacred struggle *[jihād]* in the cause of Allāh until the Mahdī emerges on the earthly scene, and a herald cries out from the sky.
- Doctrine of the Jews: The post-sunset ritual prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]* must be postponed until the stars have appeared in their constellations. Doctrine of the Rāfiḍa: The same postponement is required.
- Doctrine of the Jews: There should be a slight deviation from the *Qibla* [the exact direction in which the believers turn when performing their ritual prayers]. Doctrine of the Rāfiḍa: The same.
- Doctrine of the Jews: There should be illumination present while the ritual prayer is being performed. Doctrine of the Rāfiḍa: The same.
- Doctrine of the Jews: The [hanging] doors should be lowered while

the ritual prayer is being performed. Doctrine of the Rāfiḍa: The same.

- Doctrine of the Jews: It is lawful to shed the blood of a Muslim. Doctrine of the Rāfiḍa: The same.
- Doctrine of the Jews: It is not necessary for women to observe the *ʿidda* [the prescribed period of waiting following widowhood or divorce].[66] Doctrine of the Rāfiḍa: The same.
- Doctrine of the Jews: The procedure of divorcing a wife by three unilateral repudiations *[aṭ-ṭalāq ath-thalāth]* is not recognized as having any legal effect.[67] Doctrine of the Rāfiḍa: The same.
- The Jews have tampered with the text and distorted the meaning of the Torah *[ḥarrafū't-Tawrāt]*.

The Rāfiḍa have done likewise, in that they have tampered with the text and distorted the meaning of the Qurʾān *[ḥarrafū'l-Qurʾān]*. They justify this action on the grounds that, according to them, the original text of the Qurʾān had been modified and altered.

They maintain that changes had been introduced by rearranging the order of its contents, that it was not presented in the form in which it was actually revealed, that it was read in ways that could not be firmly attributed to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and that subtractions had been made from the text, as well as additions to it.

- The Jews hate Gabriel (peace be upon him), and they say: "He is our enemy among the angels."

This attitude is shared by at least one segment of the Rawāfiḍ, for there are some among them who maintain that Gabriel (peace be upon him) made a mistake by conveying the Divine revelation *[waḥy]* to Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), when it was actually intended to be delivered to ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him).[68]

They are guilty of falsehood. May they be doomed to perdition till the end of time!

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[66] According to the Sunnī schools of Islāmic law, the rules are as follows: In the case of a divorced woman who is not pregnant, the prescribed period of waiting *[ʿidda]*, before the expiration of which she may not contract a new marriage, is three menstrual cycles. In the case of a woman who is pregnant, the duration of the *ʿidda* is till the end of her pregnancy. In the case of a widow who is not pregnant, the length of the *ʿidda* is four months and ten nights.

[67] Although it is considered reprehensible, this form of divorce is accepted as lawful and effective by the Sunnī schools of Islāmic law, who base their doctrine on the well-known the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Nothing that is legally permissible is more hateful to Allāh (Exalted is He) than divorce by repudiation *[mā min mubāḥin abghaḍu ʿinda'llāhi taʿālā mina'ṭ-ṭalāq]*.

[68] The author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has attributed this doctrine to the Ghāliya [Extremists]. (See p. 413 above.)

On the Murji'a ["the Postponers"].

As for the Murji'a ["the Postponers"], their subsects are twelve in number: The Jahmiyya; the Ṣāliḥiyya; the Yūnusiyya; the Shamiriyya; the Yūnāniyya; the Najjāriyya; the Ghailāniyya; the Shabībiyya; the Ḥanafiyya; the Mu'ādhiyya; the Marīsiyya; the Karrāmiyya.[69]

They have come to be called the Murji'a ["the Postponers"] for the simple reason that they professed the following doctrine: Provided that an individual, he being a responsible person *[mukallaf]*,[70] makes the statement: "There is no god but Allāh; Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh *[lā ilāha illa'llāh; Muḥammadun rasūlu'llāh]*," even if he then goes on to commit every possible sin of disobedience, he will definitely not enter the Fire of Hell.[71]

They also maintain that faith *[īmān]* is a matter of words, and does not depend on deeds. According to them, deeds are articles of the sacred law *[sharā'i']*, whereas faith is a verbal statement pure and simple *[qawl mujarrad]*. They hold the view that people are not distinguished, one as being superior to another, on the basis of faith. They maintain that their faith and the faith of the angels *[malā'ika]* and the Prophets *[anbiyā']* is one and the same, without being subject to any increase, diminution or exception. As long as a person declares his faith with his tongue, even if he does not put it into practice, he is therefore a believer *[mu'min]*.

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[69] Also known as the Karāmiyya, Kirāmiyya, or Kirrāmiyya.

[70] A *mukallaf* is a sane, legally mature person; someone who is obliged to obey all the rules of Islamic law and is held responsible for his actions.

[71] There is actually a lack of unanimity among the scholars with regard to how the Murji'a ["The Postponers"] came to be so called. The explanation most commonly suggested is that they acquired the name because of their great emphasis on the doctrine of *irjā'* [postponement], according to which the judgment of sinful believers must be deferred until the Resurrection—or for all eternity, according to our author's own explanation (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

On the Jahmiyya [and other subsects of the Murji'a].

As for the Jahmiyya, their name and origin can be traced to Jahm ibn Ṣafwān,[72] who used to state his doctrine in the following terms: "Faith is neither more nor less than the acknowledgment of Allāh and His Messenger, and of everything that has come to us [by way of revelation] from His presence."[73] They profess the following doctrines:

- That the Qur'ān is a product of creation *[makhlūq]*.
- That Allāh (Exalted is He) did not speak to Moses.
- That Allāh (Exalted is He) did not speak and did not see.
- That He is not known to have any particular location *[makān]*; He possesses neither Throne *['arsh]* nor Pedestal *[kursī]*, and He is not "upon the Throne."
- They refuse to accept the reality of the [weighing of deeds in] the scales *[mawāzīn]*, and of the torment of the tomb.
- They refuse to accept that the Garden of Paradise and the Fire of Hell are products of creation, and claim that if they have been created they must eventually cease to exist.
- They maintain that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will neither speak to His creatures nor look at them on the Day of Resurrection, and that the inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise will neither look at Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) nor see Him therein.
- They maintain that faith *[īmān]* is an affair of the heart, which does not require confirmation by the tongue.

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[72] Jahm ibn Ṣafwān Abū Muhriz, a client of the Banū Rāsib, called at-Tirmidhī by some and as-Samarqandī by others. He attached himself to Ḥārith ibn Surayj, known as "the man with the black banner", during the uprisings that broke out in the province of Khurāsān toward the end of the Umayyad period, and was put to death in A.H. 128/745-6 C.E. by Salm ibn Ahwaz. His followers, called Jahmiyya after him, survived down to the 5th (11th) century in the vicinity of Tabrīz, but then adopted the doctrines of the Ash'ariyya. (See anonymous article DJAHM, in *SEI*.)

[73] *al-īmānu huwa'l-ma'rifatu bi'llāhi wa rasūlihi wa jamī'i mā jā'a min 'indihi faqat.*

- They refuse to acknowledge any of the attributes *[ṣifāt]* of the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He).

Exalted is Allāh, far beyond everything of this kind!

2. The Ṣāliḥiyya have come to be so called for the simple reason that they profess the theological doctrine of Abu'l-Ḥusain aṣ-Ṣāliḥī. The latter used to state his doctrine in the following terms: "Faith is knowledge *[al-īmān huwa'l-ma‘rifa]*, while unbelief is ignorance *[wa'l-kufr huwa'l-jahl]*." He declared that the threefold repetition of this statement could never constitute unbelief *[kufr]*, even if the only person who ever expressed it should happen to be an unbeliever *[kāfir]*. He also maintained that there is no religious duty *[‘ibāda]*, with the exception of faith alone.

3. As for the Yūnusiyya, their name and origin can be traced to Yūnus al-Barī’ [the Innocent].[74] The latter used to state his doctrine in the following terms: "Faith is knowledge, submissive obedience, and love for Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)."[75] He declared that if any individual was found lacking in any of these virtues, that person must be an unbeliever *[kāfir]*.

4. As for the Shamiriyya, their name and origin can be traced to a man called Abū Shamir.[76] The latter used to state his doctrine in the following terms: "Faith is knowledge, and submissive obedience, and love, and the affirmation that He is Unique *[Wāḥid]*, that there is nothing like unto Him. All of this taken together is what constitutes faith."

Abū Shamir also declared: "I would never refer to someone who had committed a major sin *[kabīra]* as an unrighteous person *[fāsiq]* in the absolute sense. I would always qualify my statement by saying that he is unrighteous in this or that particular respect."

5. As for the Yūnāniyya, their name indicates that they can trace their origin to Greece *[Yūnān]*.[77] They maintained that faith is knowledge and the affirmation of belief in Allāh and His Messengers,[78] and that if something does not make good sense to the logical mind, one should not do it.

[74] Also known as Yūnus ibn ‘Awn.

[75] *al-īmānu huwa'l-ma‘rifatu wa'l-khudū‘u wa'l-mahabbatu li'llāhi (‘azza wa jall).*

[76] According to A.J. Wensinck, in his article MURJI'A in *SEI*, ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī refers to this person as Abū Shāmir, and to his followers as the Shāmiriyya (spelled in each case with a long –ā–).

[77] Possibly to one of several Greek settlements in the Arab world, where a number of villages bear the name Yūnān.

[78] *al-īmānu huwa'l-ma‘rifatu wa'l-iqrāru bi'llāhi wa rusulih.*

6. As for the Najjāriyya, their name and origin can be traced to a man called Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn ʻAbdi'llāh an-Najjār [the Carpenter]. They have stated their doctrine in the following terms: "Faith consists in the acknowledgment of Allāh and His Messengers, and of those obligations *[farā'iḍ]* which have been accepted by general consensus as religious duties prescribed by Him, in humble submission *[khuḍūʻ]* to Him, and in the verbal affirmation of belief." It follows, therefore, that if a case ever arises where a person is found to be ignorant of any element of this creed, and he is confronted with the evidence, but still refuses to affirm the truth of it, that person must be considered an unbeliever *[kāfir]*.

7. As for the Ghailāniyya, their name and origin can be traced to a man called Ghailān [Abū Marwān ad-Dimashqī]. They shared the general views of the Shamiriyya. They also maintained that knowledge of the occurrence of things is necessary *[al-ʻilm bi-ḥudūth al-ashyā' ḍarūrī]*,[79] and that knowledge of the Divine Unity *[ʻilm at-tawḥīd]* is knowledge transmitted verbally. According to the account provided by Zurqān, Ghailān used to state his doctrine in these terms: "Faith is affirmation of the truth by means of the tongue;[80] in other words, it is the expression of belief *[taṣdīq]*."

8. As for the Shabībiyya, they are the followers of a man called Muḥammad ibn [Abī] Shabīb [al-Baṣrī]. They professed the doctrine that faith is the acknowledgment of Allāh and the recognition of His Uniqueness.[81] They rejected any ascription of human characteristics *[tashbīh]* to Him. Muḥammad [ibn Abī Shabīb] also maintained that faith *[īmān]* had existed within Iblīs, and that he had only become an unbeliever because of his arrogant pride.

9. As far as the Ḥanafiyya are concerned, they were a group among the followers of Abū Ḥanīfa an-Nuʻmān ibn Thābit.[82] They professed

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[79] According to the Arabic lexicographers, 'necessary' *[ḍarūrī]* knowledge is to be distinguished from those types of knowledge which are termed *iktisābī* [natural, bestowed by nature, instinctive, or such as the creature has by divine appointment], and *istidlālī* [intuitive, immediate, axiomatic, or such as originate without thought, or reflection, and intellectual examination of an evidence or a proof]. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ḍ–R–R*.)

[80] *al-īmānu huwa'l-iqrāru bi'l-lisān*.

[81] *al-īmānu huwa'l-iqrāru bi'llāhi wa'l-maʻrifatu bi-waḥdāniyyatih*.

[82] Abū Ḥanīfa (d. A.H. 150/767 C.E.) is the eponymous founder of the Ḥanafī *madhhab*, one of the four Sunnī schools of Islāmic law. According to A.J. Wensinck (in his article cited in note [76] on p. 424 above): "That Abū Ḥanīfa shared the general views of the Murji'a appears from his (unedited) letter to al-Battī, which is preserved in a MS in the library of Cairo.... The high esteem in which Abū Ḥanīfa stood as a dogmatist and as a doctor of the law would be in itself sufficient proof that the 'sect' was not too eccentric."

the doctrine that faith is the recognition and acknowledgment of Allāh and His Messenger, and of everything, as a totality, that has come to us from His presence.[83] (According to information supplied by al-Barhūqī in his book entitled *Kitāb ash-Shajara*.)

10. As for the Muʿādhiyya, their name and origin can be traced to a man called Muʿādh.[84] The latter used to state his doctrine in the following terms: "If a person is guilty of failure to obey Allāh, it may correctly be said of him that he has acted sinfully *[fasaqa]*, but he should not be called a sinner *[fāsiq]*."[85] He also maintained that the sinner *[fāsiq]* is neither the enemy of Allāh *[ʿaduwwu'llāh]* nor the friend of Allāh *[waliyyu'llāh]*.

11. As for the Marīsiyya, their name and origin can be traced to a man called Bishr [al-Ghayyāth] al-Marīsī. They profess the doctrine that faith is the affirmation of belief *[al-īmān huwa't-taṣdīq]*, and that the affirmation of belief must be made both in the heart and with the tongue. This doctrine was also professed by Ibn ar-Rāwandī.[86] He also maintained that prostration *[sujūd]* before the sun does not in itself constitute unbelief *[kufr]*, although it can be construed as a sign of unbelief.

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[83] *al-īmānu huwa'l-maʿrifatu bi'llāhi wa rasūlihi wa jamīʿi mā jā'a min ʿindih.*

[84] In the Damascus edition, the surname following the name Muʿādh is spelled "*al-Musī*", which may represent al-Muwassī or al-Musī ["the Testator"]. According to A.J. Wensinck, ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī refers to him as Abū Muʿādh at-Tawmanī.

[85] The term *fāsiq* may also be translated as " immoral person" or, more technically, "one who falls short of the legal standard of rectitude under Islamic law."

[86] Ibn ar-Rāwandī has been mentioned on p. 386 above, where he is listed as one of the authors responsible for compiling the textbooks of the Shīʿa.

On the Karrāmiyya.[87]

As for the Karrāmiyya, their name and origin can be traced to a man called ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Karrām.[88] They professed the doctrine that faith is a matter of verbal affirmation, not an affair of the heart. They maintained that the hypocrites *[munāfiqūn]* were in actual fact believers *[mu'minūn]*.

Another peculiarity of their teaching is the assertion that the ability to act *[istiṭāʿa]* precedes the action *[fiʿl]*, in spite of the fact that the existence of the former occurs simultaneously with the latter. This is in contradiction to the doctrine of the People of the Sunna, according to whom the ability to act is unconditionally simultaneous with the action, and does not precede it.

The names of the authors who compiled their textbooks are as follows: Abu'l-Ḥusain aṣ-Ṣāliḥī, Ibn ar-Rāwandī, Muḥammad ibn Shabīb, and al-Ḥusain ibn Muḥammad an-Najjār.

The majority of the people who adhere to their doctrine are to be found in the East and in the administrative districts of the province of Khurāsān.

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[87] Although treated here under a separate subsection heading, the Karrāmiyya were included in the author's list (on p. 422 above) of the groups belonging to the Murji'a persuasion, the rest of which have been discussed in the immediately preceding subsection. See also p. 436 below.

[88] ʿAbdu'llāh Muhammad ibn Karrām [or Karām, Kirām or Kirrām] as-Sijistānī (d. A.H. 255).

On the doctrines of the Muʿtazila and the Qadariyya.[89]

The Muʿtazila [Separatists] came to be so called on account of their separation [*iʿtizāl*] from the truth, or, as some prefer to put it, because of their separation from the generally accepted doctrines [*aqāwīl*] of the Muslims. This separation came about in the following circumstances:

The members of the Muslim community were in disagreement over the question of how to classify a person who has committed a major sin [*kabīra*]. Some of them said: "Such people are believers [*mu'minūn*], to the extent of the faith [*īmān*] they still possess." There were also some among them who said: "No, they are unbelievers [*kāfirūn*]." Then along came Wāṣil ibn ʿAṭā' with a third opinion on the issue. He parted company with the Muslims, and separated himself off from the believers, for he said: "Those who commit major sins are neither believers nor unbelievers."

There we have one explanation of how they [as the followers of Wāṣil ibn ʿAṭā'] came to be known as the Muʿtazila. According to some, however, they acquired this name on account of their *iʿtizāl* [separation in the sense of withdrawal or secession] from the council [*majlis*] convened by al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). As he walked past them, al-Ḥasan remarked: "These people are *muʿtazila* [a bunch of separatists]," and so it came about that this nickname stuck to them.

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[89] The Muʿtazila ['the Separatists'], whose original motivation may have been largely political, played a major rôle in the development of Islamic philosophy and theology. In the long run, their methods proved too speculative and rationalistic to win favor with the majority of the scholars in the Muslim community. For a certain period, however, the doctrines of the Muʿtazila were not merely accepted by the rulers in Baghdād, but were actively imposed as the official dogma of the Islamic State. Under the Caliphs al-Ma'mūn, al-Muʿtasim and al-Wāthiq (218–34/833–49), dissenting scholars were tried and persecuted by an inquisition [*mihna*].

One notable victim of this persecution was Imām Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who patiently submitted to corporal punishment and imprisonment, steadfastly refusing to disavow his sincerely held beliefs. The notorious *mihna* was eventually abolished, and Imām Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal's trials ended, when al-Mutawakkil succeeded to the Caliphate and abandoned his predecessors' support of the Muʿtazila.

The Qadariyya were so called because of their refusal to accept the doctrine of absolute Divine predestination [*qadar*], and their belief in the power [*qudra*] of human beings to create their own actions. They played a significant rôle in the early period of Islamic theological debate, prior to the emergence of the Muʿtazila.

They also looked up to ʿAmr ibn ʿUbaid as one of their leaders. On a certain occasion, when al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī became angry with ʿAmr ibn ʿUbaid, and was sharply criticized on that account, he responded by saying: "How dare you rebuke me so harshly for the sake of a such a man? I saw him in a dream, prostrating himself in worship to the sun instead of to Allāh!"

As for the Qadariyya, they are so called because of their refusal to acknowledge the foreordainment *[qaḍā']* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) and His predestination *[qadar]* with respect to the sins of disobedience committed by His human servants, and because of their insistence that human beings are themselves the authors of those actions.

With respect to the denial of the divine attributes *[nafy aṣ-ṣifāt]*, the doctrine of the Muʿtazila, the Jahmiyya and the Qadariyya is one and the same. We have already discussed some of their teachings on the subject of religious belief *[iʿtiqād]*.[90]

The name of the authors who compiled their textbooks are as follows: Abu'l-Hudhail,[91] Jaʿfar ibn Ḥarb, al-Khayyāt,[92] al-Kaʿbī,[93] Abū Hāshim, Abū ʿAbdi'llāh al-Baṣrī, and ʿAbd al-Jabbār ibn Aḥmad al-Hamadhānī.[94]

The majority of the people who adhere to their doctrine are to be found in [the districts of the Iranian province of Khūzistān called] al-ʿAskar, al-Ahwāz and Jahzam.

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[90] See pp. 214, 232, 273 and 277 above.

[91] According to H.S. Nyberg (art. AL-MUʿTAZILA in *SEI*): "The true founder of the dogmatic system of the Muʿtazila was Abu'l-Hudhail Muhammad ibn al-Hudhail al-ʿAllāf (d. A.H. 840). Abu'l-Hudhail, his friends and pupils, continued on a large scale the polemic against Manichaeism.... On the other hand, he fought the Rāfiḍa most vigorously...."

[92] Abu'l-Ḥusain ʿAbd ar-Rahim ibn Muhammad al-Khayyāt is regarded as the great authority on the history of the Muʿtazila. He died at the end of the third century A.H.

[93] Abu'l-Qāsim ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Ahmad al-Balkhī al-Kaʿbī was a pupil of al-Khayyāt. He founded a school at Nasaf, where he died in A.H. 319/931 C.E.

[94] The judge *[al-Qāḍī]* ʿAbd al-Jabbār ibn Ahmad al-Hamadhānī migrated in A.H. 360/971 C.E. to Rayy, where he founded an influential school.

They can be subdivided into six factions, namely the Hudhaliyya, the Naẓẓāmiyya, the Muʻammariyya, the Jubbā'iyya, the Kaʻbiyya and the Bahshamiyya.

The point on which all the various factions of the Muʻtazila are in virtually unanimous agreement is the negation of the divine attributes *[ṣifāt]* in their entirety. They deny that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has knowledge *[ʻilm]*, power *[qudra]*, life *[ḥayāt]*, and the faculties of hearing *[samʻ]* and sight *[baṣar]*.

They likewise deny the reality of those divine attributes that have been corroborated by traditional report, such as *istiwā'* [firmly establishing Himself (on the Throne)], *nuzūl* [descending (to the heaven of this lower world)],[95] as well as others that could be mentioned.

They are also in general agreement in professing the following doctrines:

- That the Speech *[kalām]* of Allāh is not eternal, but has been created subsequent to the beginning of time, and that His Will *[irāda]* is likewise a product of creation *[muḥdatha]*.
- That He speaks [not directly but] by means of a faculty of speech that He has created in others, and that He wills by means of a will that has been brought into existence for no effective purpose *[lā fī maḥall]*.
- That He (Exalted is He) may wish for something contrary to that which has been fixed by His own predetermination *[yurīdu khilāfa maʻlūmih]*.
- That He may want from His servants something that will never come to be, while something that He does not wish may actually come into being.
- That He (Exalted is He) is powerless to influence the decisions made by others, and that the very idea of His exercising such influence is really quite absurd.
- That He does not create the actions of His servants, since they themselves, not their Lord, are the creators of those actions.
- That much of the food consumed as nourishment by a human being is not made available to him by the providence of Allāh—not, that is, in the case where the food is unlawful *[ḥarām]*, since the only food provided by Allāh is that which is lawful *[ḥalāl]*, to the exclusion of what is unlawful.

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[95] See above, pp. 171–83.

• That a human being may be killed before his appointed time *[ajal]*, and that the killer may cut the life of his victim short, before the moment when he was destined to die.

• That if anyone professing to be a monotheist *[muwaḥḥid]* is guilty of committing a major sin, even if the offense does not amount to explicit unbelief *[kufr]*, he thereby removes himself from the protection of his faith *[īmān]* and is doomed to abide in the Fire of Hell for all eternity, while all his good deeds are rendered null and void. They even maintain that the intercession *[shafāʿa]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) can be of no avail as far as people guilty of major sins *[ahl al-kabāʾir]* are concerned.

• Most of them deny the reality of the torment of the tomb *[ʿadhāb al-qabr]*.

• They regard it as permissible to rebel against the ruler *[sulṭān]* and to withdraw one's obedience from him.

• They reject the idea that a person who has died can receive any benefit through an offering made on his behalf by someone who is still alive, whether it be a prayer of supplication *[duʿāʾ]* or an act of charity *[ṣadaqa]*, for they do not believe that the spiritual reward for such an offering could ever reach him.

• They also maintain that Allāh (Glory be to Him) did not speak to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muḥammad (the blessings of Allāh be upon them all), not to Gabriel, not to Michael, not to Isrāfīl, and not to the bearers of the Heavenly Throne *[ḥamalat al-ʿarsh]*, nor did He look upon them, just as He does not speak to Iblīs and the Jews and Christians.

Let us now turn to consider the doctrines peculiar to each of the separate sects of the Muʿtazila:

1. As for the Hudhaliyya, their Shaikh, Abū Hudhail, was idiosyncratic in teaching the following doctrines:

• That Allāh does have a kind of knowledge, a kind of power, a kind of hearing and a kind of sight.

• That the Speech of Allāh (Exalted is He) is for the most part a product of creation *[makhlūq]*, but that one part of it is uncreated *[ghair makhlūq]*, namely His saying: "Be!" *[kun]*.

• That Allāh (Exalted is He) is not set apart in opposition to His creatures.

• That the scope of Allāh's effective power is not unlimited, so the people of the Garden of Paradise may be stranded forever in a state of immobility, while Allāh (Exalted is He) is unable to set them in motion, and since they are incapable of making themselves move. It is possible, however, for actions to be performed by the dead, the disabled and the decrepit.

• Abū Hudhail rejected the idea that Allāh (Exalted is He) has always been All-Hearing *[Samī']*.

2. As for the Naẓẓāmiyya, their Shaikh an-Naẓẓām used to teach that inanimate bodies *[jamādāt]* are activated by the forces of nature. He used to deny the existence of accidents *[a'rāḍ]*, with the exception of dependent motion *[ḥaraka i'timādiyya]*.

He maintained that the real human being is the spirit *[al-insān huwa'r-rūḥ]*, and that no one has seen the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), since all that anyone ever saw was his envelope *[ẓarf]*, meaning his physical body.

He made a radical break with the general consensus *[ijmā']*, when he declared that if a person deliberately refrains from performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, even though he is reminded of it, he is not required to make it up later. He actually refused to recognize the infallibility of the general consensus of the Muslim community *[umma]*,[96] and allowed for the possibility that its members might agree to accept an untruth *[bāṭil]*.

He also maintained that faith *[īmān]* is the same thing as unbelief *[kufr]*, and that worshipful obedience *[ṭā'a]* is the same thing as sinful disobedience *[ma'ṣiya]*. He held that the conduct of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was no different from the conduct of Iblīs the accursed, and that the behavior of 'Umar and 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with them both) was no different from the behavior of al-Ḥajjāj.[97] His emphasis on this theme, and his insistence on pursuing it, is less inexplicable than it may seem at first sight, because he often used to say: "All animate creatures are one single species *[al-ḥayawān kulluhu jins wāḥid]*."

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[96] In a well-known and frequently quoted tradition *[hadīth]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) declared:

> My Community *[Ummatī]* will never agree on an error.

[97] The behavior of al-Ḥajjāj, as an early governor of 'Irāq, was in fact notoriously harsh and brutal.

He asserted that the Qurʾān does not represent a miracle *[muʿjiz]* in its mode of composition. He claimed that Allāh (Exalted is He) would not be capable of exposing an infant to the fire, even if he stood on the very brink of Hell, nor of casting him into it.

He was the first to propound the doctrine of unbelief *[kufr]* among apparently devout Muslims *[ahl al-Qibla]*.[98]

He used to say: "The physical body can be divided up into an infinite number of parts." He also used to say: "There are snakes, scorpions and dung beetles in the Garden of Paradise. As a matter of fact, there are even dogs and pigs in the Garden of Paradise."

3. The Muʿammariyya[99] take their name from their Shaikh al-Muʿammar,[100] who used to profess the doctrines of the physicists or natural scientists *[ahl aṭ-ṭabāʾiʿ]*. He carried those teachings to excessive lengths, however, for he went so far as to maintain that Allāh (Exalted is He) has created neither any color, nor any flavor, nor any scent, and neither any death nor any life. He held that all of this is the work of the physical body *[fiʿl al-jism]*, functioning in accordance with its nature *[bi-ṭabʿihi]*.

Al-Muʿammar also used to profess the doctrine that the Qurʾān is the work of the physical bodies, and not the work of Allāh. What is more, he refused to accept the idea that Allāh (Exalted is He) could be Pre-Existent from All Eternity *[Qadīm]*.

May he be doomed to perdition, and may Allāh (Exalted is He) keep him far removed from this Community *[Umma]*.

4. The Jubbāʾiyya derive their name from their Shaikh, al-Jubbāʾī,[101] who violated the Islāmic consensus *[ijmāʿ]* and broke away from it to formulate several doctrines peculiar to himself.

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[98] Literally, "the people of the Qibla," i.e., those who turn to face the direction of the Kaʿba in Mecca when they perform their prayers.

[99] The spelling in the text of the printed edition, with an *alif* after the *mīm*, must surely be a typesetting error.

[100] The contribution made by al-Muʿammar to the development of Islamic theological debate has not been deemed sufficiently significant to earn him a separate article in the *SEI*. He has not gone entirely unnoticed in that work, however, since he is mentioned in the article AL-MUʿTAZILA (p. 424), where H.S. Nyberg writes: "there was a crowd of important theologians at Basra, [one of them being] Muʿammar, an independent mind whose ideas have not yet been analysed."

[101] Abū ʿAlī Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Jubbāʾī. According to H.S. Nyberg (*SEI*, art. cit.), he was undoubtedly the most important Basra theologian in the second half of the third Islamic century.

For one thing, he maintained that human beings are creators of their own actions, a conclusion which no one had arrived at before him. He also used to profess the following eccentric teachings:

- That Allāh (Exalted is He) is obeying His servants, whenever He does what they wish.
- If someone takes an oath to the effect that he will give his creditor his due on the following day, and if he qualifies this statement by saying, "if Allāh wills *[in shā' a'llāh]*," the qualification gives him no advantage, and he will therefore be guilty of perjury if he does not pay up.
- If someone steals the value of five dirhams [silver coins], that person is to be classed as a *fāsiq* [an immoral person; one who falls short of the legal standard of rectitude under Islamic law, and is therefore unacceptable as a witness]. This does not apply, however, if the value of what is stolen is less, even by a tiny amount.

5. The Bahshamiyya,[102] trace their origin to Abū Hāshim ibn al-Jubbā'ī.[103] This Abū Hāshim used to maintain that it is possible to conceive of the sane adult *[mukallaf]* as potentially active *[qādir]*, even though he may be neither performing nor refraining from an action, so Allāh (Exalted is He) will punish him for his deed [as if he had actually done it].

Abū Hāshim also used to maintain that, if a person repents of all his sins but one, his repentance cannot be regarded as valid, not even with respect to the sins of which he has repented.

6. As for the Ka'biyya, they trace their name and origin to a certain Abu'l-Qāsim al-Ka'bī,[104] who was a native of Baghdād. He refused to accept that Allāh is All-Hearing *[Samī']*, All-Seeing *[Baṣīr]*, and denied that He exercises any will in reality. According to his teaching, the will *[irāda]* of Allāh (Exalted is He) in relation to the action of His servants is the commandment *[amr]* to perform it, and His will in relation to His own action is His knowledge and the absence of constraint.

Abu'l-Qāsim al-Ka'bī also maintained that the entire universe is a composite whole *[mala']*; that anything that moves is no more than the first layer of the physical bodies; that the human being, even if he were greased with oil and seemed to move along, would not be what was actually in motion, since it would only be the oil that was moving.

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[102] The name Bahshamiyya has been formed as a kind of acronym from Abū Hāshim, the name of the founder of the sect, by taking the letter *bā'* from Abū and the three root letters *hā'–shīn–mīm* from Hāshim.

[103] Son of the aforementioned founder of the Jubbā'iyya.

[104] See note [93] on p. 429 above.

He used to profess the doctrine that the Qurʾān is *muḥdath* [produced, originated—and therefore not existing from all eternity], but he did not refer to it as *makhlūq* [created].

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Concerning the theological doctrine of the Mushabbiha [Anthropomorphists][105]

Concerning the doctrine of the Anthropomorphists *[al-Mushabbiha]*, we have three subsects to consider: The Hishāmiyya, the Muqātiliyya and the Wāsimiyya.[106]

The point on which all three of these subsects are in unanimous agreement is that Allāh (Exalted is He) is a physical body *[jism]*, and that it is impossible to conceive of that which exists *[al-mawjūd]* in anything other than strictly physical terms. They were persuaded to adopt the anthropomorphic doctrine *[tashbīh]* under the influence of the sects known as the Rawāfiḍ[107] and the Karrāmiyya.[108]

The author who compiled their text books was a certain Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam, whose works include a book on the proof of the reality of the physical body *[fī ithbāt al-jism]*.

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[105] The Arabic term *mushabbiha* is a collective participial form corresponding to the verbal noun *tashbīh*, the literal meaning of which is 'likening, comparison.' In the context of Islamic theological debate *[kalām]*, the technical meaning of *tashbīh* is 'anthropomorphization' or, in other words, the ascription of human characteristics to Allāh (Exalted is He), and those who profess this doctrine are known as al-Mushabbiha [the Anthropomorphists].

The latter stand at the opposite extreme in the spectrum of Islamic theology from the exponents of *taʿṭīl* [lit., 'neutralizing' or 'putting out of action'], which means as a technical term the denial of the very existence of the attributes *[ṣifāt]* of Allāh (Exalted is He). Those who profess this doctrine are known as al-Muʿaṭṭila. (For previous reference, see p. 231 above.)

[106] The spelling *Wāsimiyya* (with *alif* after the *wāw*) occurs in the body of the printed text of the Damascus edition. The *alif* is missing, however, in the editor's footnote, where he states that the *Wasimiyya* (sic) are indeed listed in the original manuscript at his disposal, although the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) does not provide any further explanation in their case.

[107] As used by Sunnī Muslims, the term *ar-Rawāfiḍ* (and its synonym *ar-Rāfiḍa*) is commonly applied to the Shīʿa as a whole. (See pp. 409–21 above.)

[108] The *Karrāmiyya* trace their name and origin to a man called ʿAbdu'llāh Muhammad ibn Karrām [or Karām, Kirām or Kirrām] as-Sijistānī (d. A.H. 255). According to D.S. Margoliouth (art. KARRĀMIYA in *SEI*): "His chief theological doctrine, which caused the inclusion of his sect among the Mushabbiha, was that the Divine Being is a Substance *[jauhar]*, for which some of his followers substituted Body *[jism]*, though without human members, and in contact *[mumāssa*, for which the euphemism *mulāqāt* was substituted] with the Throne, which is located in space." (For previous reference, see p. 427 above.)

1. The Hishāmiyya trace their name and origin to Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam, who maintained that Allāh (Exalted is He) is a physical body with the dimensions of length, breadth and depth *[jism ṭawīl ʿarīḍ ʿamīq]*; a brilliant light *[nūr sāṭiʿ]*; having a definite, measurable quantity *[qadr mina'l-aqdār]*, like a pure ingot; capable of moving and of being at rest, of standing up and of sitting down.[109]

According to a story that has been told about him, he once said: "The best of all measurements would be seven spans."[110]

When someone asked him: "Is your Lord Supreme *[Aʿẓam]*, or One *[Aḥad]*?" he replied: "My Lord is Supreme."

2. The Muqātiliyya trace their name and origin to Muqātil ibn Sulaimān. He is reported as having said that Allāh (Exalted is He) is a physical substance; that He is a body *[juththa]* in the form of a human being—flesh and blood; that He has limbs and organs, such as a head, a tongue and a neck; and yet in all of the above He does not bear any resemblance to things *[lā yushbihu'l-ashyāʾ]*, nor do they resemble him.[111]

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[109] According to R. Strothmann (art. TASHBĪH in *SEI*): "Perhaps the most suggestive remark is that of al-Ashʿarī..., who says that Hishām b. al-Ḥakam expressed five different opinions on the nature of God in the space of one year."

[110] The lexicographers define a span *[shibr]* as "the space between the extremity of the thumb and the little finger, when extended apart in the usual manner."

[111] As R. Strothmann points out (art. cit.): "Generally speaking *tajsīm*, i.e., attributing to God a body, should not without more ado be ranked with *tashbīh* in its crudest form, since the very phrase 'not like our body' is expressly added, even by Hishām b. al-Ḥakam."

Concerning the theological teachings of the Jahmiyya.[112]

Let us now turn our attention to the theological teachings of the Jahmiyya, [who trace their name and origin to Jahm ibn Ṣafwān Abū Muḥriz].

Peculiar to Jahm ibn Ṣafwān is the assertion that, although certain effects may appear to be produced by human causation, it is only in a metaphorical sense *['ala'l-majāz]* that the origin of such effects can be attributed to the human being, not as a matter of reality *[lā 'ala'l-ḥaqīqa]*. [In other words, to attribute any action to a human being is merely a figure of speech], just as it is when one says: "The date palm grew tall, and the fruit ripened."[113]

He always refused to profess the doctrine that Allāh is Cognizant of things prior to their coming into existence *['Ālim bi'l-ashyā'i qabla kaunihā]*. He maintained that the Garden of Paradise and the Fire of Hell will eventually cease to exist. He also denied the reality of the [Divine] attributes *[ṣifāt]*.[114]

The theological school *[madhhab]* founded by Jahm was located in a town called Tirmidh, or, according to some authorities, in Marw. He is the author of a literary work on the negation of the [Divine] attributes. He was put to death by Muslim ibn Aḥwad[115] al-Marwānī.

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[112] For previous references to the Jahmiyya sect, see note [15] on p. 394 above.

[113] According to R. Strothmann (art. cit.): "Ibn Ḥanbal earns from Jahm the reproach of hypostasizing after the fashion of the Christian Trinity for his dogma that God is eternal with all his eternal attributes, for which he unhesitatingly uses the metaphor of the palm-tree consisting of root, trunk, branch, leaves, and sap."

[114] The term *sifāt* is the plural form of the Arabic noun *sifa* [quality, property; attribute; characteristic, distinguishing mark, peculiarity, adjective], which is derived from the root *w-s-f*. Theological controversy concerning the *sifāt* of Allāh (Exalted is He) was largely due to the fact that the term does not occur in the Qur'ān.

There is one occurrence of the infinitive *wasf* (6:39), and various forms of the imperfect of the fist stem are used thirteen times in all: *tasifu* (16:62, 16:116), *tasifūn* (12:18, 12:77, 21:18, 21:112); *yasifūn* (6:100, 21:22, 23:91, 23:96, 37:159, 37:180, 43:82). In every case, there is an implication of falsehood in the meanings: "to ascribe or assert as a description, to attribute," as in His words (Exalted is He):

> Glory be to Him! High Exalted be He above what they ascribe/attribute [to Him]! *[Subḥānahu wa ta'ālā 'ammā yasifūn]*. (6:100)

[115] The name is spelled thus in the Damascus edition. The *SEI* (art. D̲J̲AHM), however, gives the form Salm ibn Ahwaz as the correct form of this name.

Concerning the theological teachings of the Ḍirāriyya[116]

As for the Ḍirāriyya, the name and origin of this sect can be traced to a man called Ḍirār ibn ʿAmr.[117]

According to the teaching of Ḍirār, the physical bodies or substances *[ajsām]* are accidents assembled as a conglomerate *[aʿrāḍ mujtamiʿa]*. He also maintained that it is possible for the accidents to be transformed into physical bodies or substances *[an tanqaliba'l-aʿrāḍu ajsāman]*. He taught that the ability to act *[istiṭāʿa]* is part and parcel of the person who is capable of acting *[mustaṭīʿ]*, and that it exists prior to the action. He rejected the *qirāʾa* [manner of recitation, punctuation and vocalization of the text of the Qurʾān] of Ibn Masʿūd and Ubayy ibn Kaʿb (may Allāh be well pleased with them both).[118]

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[116] See previous reference on p. 398 above, where the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has listed the Ḍirāriyya as one of the ten basic sectarian divisions.

[117] Somewhat surprisingly, there is no article in the *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam* devoted exclusively to Ḍirār ibn ʿAmr and the Ḍirāriyya. He is referred to parenthetically, however, in the article AL-NAD̲J̲D̲J̲ĀR by H.S. Nyberg, who notes the significant points of agreement between the two theologians.

[118] According to F. Buhl (art. AL-ḲURʾĀN in *SEI*): "The men to whom particular editions [of the text of the Qurʾān, prior to the authorization of ʿUthmān's version] are ascribed were… Ubayy b. Kaʿb…, ʿAbd Allāh b. Masʿūd…, Abū Mūsā ʿAbd Allāh al-Ashʿarī…, and Miqdād b. ʿAmr…. All these recensions gradually disappeared after the authorization of ʿUthmān's Qurʾān…. Besides these recensions there was a further one, on which ʿUthmān's edition was later based, and which is associated with Zaid."

Concerning the theological teachings of the Najjāriyya.

The name and origin of the Najjāriyya sect can be traced to a man called al-Ḥusain ibn Muḥammad [Abū ʻAbdi'llāh] an-Najjār.[119]

According to an-Najjār, all activity *[fiʻl al-fāʻilīn]*[120] is to be predicated of Allāh (Exalted is He) as far as the reality is concerned, and of the human being [only in a metaphorical sense].[121]

He always maintained the doctrine of the denial of the Divine attributes *[nafy aṣ-ṣifāt]*. In fact his teaching on the subject of the denial of the Divine attributes was the same as that of the Muʻtazila, except when it came to the denial of the Divine will *[irāda]*, since an-Najjār asserted that the Eternally Pre-Existent One does exercise will on His own behalf *[al-Qadīm Murīd li-nafsih]*. [Like the Muʻtazila] he also professed the doctrine of the creation *[khalq]* of the Qur'ān.

According to his teaching, Allāh is One who possesses the faculty of will *[Murīd]* in the sense that He can neither be coerced *[maqhūr]* nor compelled by superior force *[maghlūb]*. Allāh is One who possesses the faculty of speech *[Mutakallim]* in the sense that He is not incapable of speech *[laisa bi-ʻājiz ʻani'l-kalām]*. He is unfailingly Generous, in the sense that avarice *[bukhl]* could never be predicated of Him.

The theological school *[madhhab]* of an-Najjār has a close affinity with that of Ibn ʻAwn and Abū Yūsuf ar-Rāzī. The followers of his school are mostly to be found in Qāshān.

[119] According to H.S. Nyberg (art. AL-NAD̲J̲D̲J̲ĀR in *SEI*) : "An-Najjār like his master Bishr represents the reformed and modified Jahmiyya [see pp. 438 above]. The influence of Muʻtazila theology on this school is manifest; on the other hand, the Muʻtazila itself, especially that of Baghdād, seems to have received certain quite important stimuli from his school in spite of its opposition to it."

[120] Literally, "the doing of the doers."

[121] Some Arabic word or expression equal or equivalent in meaning to the phrase "only in a metaphorical sense" (supplied in brackets by the translator) must surely have been omitted at this point in the printed text of the Damascus edition.

Concerning the theological teachings of the Kullābiyya.[122]

The Kullābiyya trace their name and origin to a certain Abū ʿAbdi'llāh ibn Kullāb, who used to profess the doctrine that the attributes *[ṣifāt]* of Allāh are neither preexistent from all eternity *[qadīma]* nor brought into being in time *[muḥdatha]*. He would always insist: "I do not say that His attributes are He *[ṣifātuhu hiya Huwa]*, nor that they are other than He *[wa lā hiya ghairuhu]*."[123]

According to Abū ʿAbdi'llāh ibn Kullāb, the significance of *istiwā'* [lit., setting oneself straight, i.e., the expression usually translated: "has firmly established Himself"][124] is simply the negation of crookedness *[iʿwijāj]*. This refers to the saying of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> The All-Merciful has firmly established Himself upon the Throne *[ar-Raḥmānu ʿala'l-ʿarshi'stawā]*. (20:5)

For he maintained that Allāh has never ceased to be in the state He was in before *[lam yazal ʿalā mā kāna ʿalaihi min qablu]*, and that there is no [question of His having a] spatial location *[lā makān]*.

Ibn Kullāb also refused to accept [the orthodox teaching] that the Qur'ān is made up of letters of the alphabet *[ḥurūf]*.[125]

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[122] It may be noted that the Kullābiyya have not been deemed sufficiently significant to deserve a separate article in the *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, in spite of the fact that they are listed by Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) as one of the ten basic sectarian divisions which gave rise to the seventy-three sects that are mentioned in the tradition *[hadīth]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). (See above, p. 398.)

[123] As D.B. Macdonald points out (art. ṢIFA in *SEI*): "The *ṣifāt* of Allāh are to be distinguished from his Names *[asmā']*. The Names are the epithets applied to Him as descriptives in the Qur'ān.... But His *ṣifāt* are strictly the abstract qualities which lie behind these epithets, as *qudra* behind *Qadīr* and *ʿilm* behind *ʿĀlim*. A very important problem in theology is the relation of these *ṣifāt* to His *dhāt*. The resultant orthodox statement, after long controversy, is that they are eternal, subsisting in His essence, and that they are not He, nor are they other than He *[Huwa wa-lā ghairuhu]*...."

[124] The term *istiwā'* is actually the verbal noun corresponding to the verb *[i]stawā*, which occurs in several verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān, including the one cited in this passage of our text. The interpretation of these verses was one of the central issues of debate during the early development of Islamic theology *[ʿilm al-kalām]*. (See pp. 172–77 above.)

[125] For the orthodox teaching on this subject, see pp. 190–93 above.

Concerning the theological teachings of the Sālimiyya.[126]

Let us now examine the theological teachings of the Sālimiyya, the sect which traces its name to a man called [Abū ʿAbdi'llāh Muḥammad] Ibn Sālim.[127]

According to one of their doctrines, Allāh (Glory be to Him) will become visible on the Day of Resurrection in the shape of a human being endowed with the praiseworthy attributes of Muḥammad *[ādamī Muḥammadī]*. They also teach that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will manifest Himself to all of His creatures on the Day of Resurrection, namely, to the jinn as well as to humankind, to the angels and to the animals—to each and every one of them in the ideal form corresponding to their mode of perception.

The proof of their falsehood is to be found in the Book of Allāh (Exalted is He), in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. (42:11)

According to another of their doctrines, Allāh (Exalted is He) has a special secret *[sirr]*, by which, if He were to make it manifest, the whole order of the universe would be rendered null and void *[baṭala't-tadbīr]*. The Prophets *[anbiyā']* have a special secret, by which, if they were to make it manifest, Prophethood *[nubuwwa]* would be rendered null and void The learned scholars *[ʿulamāʾ]* also have a special secret, by which, if they were to make it manifest, all knowledge *[ʿilm]* would be rendered null and void.

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[126] The Sālimiyya are not included in the list (p. 398 above) of the ten basic sectarian divisions. Their importance is evident, however, from the fact that our author devotes considerably more attention to them here than to most of the other sects. Nor has the significance of their contribution to Islamic theological debate escaped the notice of Western scholars, since they have been accorded a separate, full-column article (SĀLIMIYA) in the *SEI*, where L. Massignon has included a reference to *al-Ghunya li-tālibī tarīq al-haqq* (Cairo edition of A.H. 1288, i. 83–84) in his bibliography of relevant source materials. He describes the Sālimiyya as a "school of dogmatic theologians, which was formed among the Mālikī Sunnites in Basra in the 3rd–4th century."

[127] Abū ʿAbdi'llāh Muhammad Ibn Sālim (d. A.H. 297/909 C.E.) was succeeded as head of the Sālimiyya by his son Abu'l-Ḥasan Ahmad Ibn Sālim (d. A.H. 350/960 C.E.). The senior Ibn Sālim was the principal disciple of the famous Sahl at-Tustarī, who is therefore regarded by some as the true founder of the school or sect.

This doctrine of theirs is without sound foundation, because Allāh (Exalted is He) is All-Wise *[Ḥakīm]* and His universal management *[tadbīr]* is so perfectly planned *[muḥkam]* as to allow no scope for nullification and corruption. To accept the ideas they propound would lead to the invalidation of His Wisdom *[Ḥikma]* (Exalted is He), and that would be nothing short of unbelief *[kufr]*.

According to yet another of their doctrines, the unbelievers *[kuffār]* will get to see Allāh (Exalted is He) in the hereafter, and He will call them to account.

Another thesis of theirs is that Iblīs did bow down in prostration before Adam the second time around. On this point the evidence to refute their falsehood is to be found in the Qurʾān itself, in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> [And when We said the angels: "Bow down in prostration before Adam," they fell prostrate], all except Iblīs. He refused and gave a display of arrogant pride, and so became one of the unbelievers. (2:34)

We may also cite His words (Exalted is He):

> [We created you, then We shaped you, then We said to the angels: "Bow down in prostration before Adam," so they prostrated themselves], all except Iblīs—he was not one of those who bowed in prostration. (7:11)

They also teach that Iblīs did not enter the Garden of Paradise, but here again the evidence to refute their falsehood is to be found in the Qurʾān itself, this time in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> He said [to Iblīs]: "Then go forth from it [the Garden of Paradise], for you are accursed *[rajīm]*." (15:34)

According to another thesis of theirs, Gabriel used to come to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) without moving away from his place. They also maintain that, when Allāh (Exalted is He) spoke to Moses (peace be upon him), the latter became conceited about himself, so Allāh conveyed to him by way of inspiration: "O Moses, are you becoming conceited about yourself? Take a good look and see what your eyes can see!" Thereupon Moses extended his gaze, and—lo and behold!—he saw in front of him a hundred mountains *[ṭūr]*, with a Moses on top of every single mountain.

This story must be dismissed as objectionable, however, according to the experts on the transmission of such reports *[ahl an-naql]* and to the authoritative scholars of tradition *[aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth]*, who regard it as a spurious tradition *[ḥadīth bāṭil]*. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) actually issued a threat to those who might tell lies about him, for he said:

> If anyone tells a lie about me, with deliberate intent, then let him occupy his seat in the Fire of Hell!

Among the teachings of the Sālimiyya, we may also mention their doctrine that Allāh (Exalted is He) wills acts of obedience from His human servants, and does not will acts of sinful disobedience from them. They maintain that He (Almighty and Glorious is He) has willed the latter through them, not from them *[bihim lā minhum]*. This must be untrue, because Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> If Allāh dooms someone to sin *[man yuridi'llāhu fitnatahu]*, you will never be able to avail him against Allāh in any way at all. (5:41)[128]

[The expression "dooms someone to sin"] means: "makes him guilty of unbelief *[kaffarahu]*."

Allāh (Exalted is He) has also said:

> And if your Lord had so willed it, they would never have done so. (6:112)

And He has said (Exalted is He):

> And if Allāh had so willed it, they would not have fought one with another. (2:253)

To cite another of their teachings, they maintain that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to memorize the Qur'ān even before [he was called to] the Prophethood *[nubuwwa]*, and before Gabriel (peace be upon him) started coming to him.

Once again, the evidence to refute their falsehood is to be found in the Qur'ān itself, in this case in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> Not before this [O Muhammad] did you recite any Book, nor did you inscribe it with your right hand. (29:48)

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[128] The next sentence in this Qur'ānic verse reads:

> Such are they whose hearts Allāh does not wish to purify *[ulā'ika'lladhīna lam yuridi'llāhu an yuṭahhira qulūbahum]*.

According to another thesis of theirs, Allāh (Exalted is He) is reciting upon the tongue of every reciter of the Qur'ān *[yaqra'u 'alā lisāni kulli qāri']*, and that when people are listening to the Qur'ān as it is being read by a reciter, they are actually hearing it from Allāh. To make such an assertion is to come perilously close to professing [the heretical doctrine of] *ḥulūl* [hylomorphism or incarnation].[129] We take refuge with Allāh from that kind of error. If followed through to its logical consequence, it would amount to asserting that Allāh (Exalted is He) could be guilty of making grammatical mistakes and of mispronouncing the Arabic words of the text [as many unskilled reciters obviously do while they are reading the Qur'ān]. This would be nothing short of unbelief *[kufr]*.

The Sālimiyya also profess the doctrine that Allāh (Exalted is He) is in every place, and that there is no distinction to be drawn between the Throne *['Arsh]* and other places. Here again, the evidence to refute their falsehood is to be found in the Qur'ān itself, where Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> The All-Merciful has firmly established Himself upon the Throne *[ar-Raḥmānu 'ala'l-'arshi'stawā]*. (20:5)

There is no statement to the effect that He has firmly established Himself upon the earth *['ala'l-arḍi'stawā]*, nor on the bellies of the mountains *['ala buṭūni'l-jibāl]* and other places besides these.

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[129] The philosophical term *hulūl* is derived from the Arabic verb *halla*, meaning "to loosen, unfold, alight, settle in a place *[mahall]*." As a technical term of classical Islamic theology, it came to be applied to the relation between a body and its location, or between an accident and its substance. The expression *hulūl ar-rūh fi'l-badan* has been applied to the substantial union of the body and the soul, and *hulūl al-'aql al-fa''āl fi'l-insān* to the substantial union of a divine spirit with man.

This brings us to the conclusion of this section, which has been devoted to a concise and summary treatment of the articles of religious belief and the basic principles of Islamic jurisprudence and theology *[mā yata‘allaq bi’l-i‘tiqād wa’l-uṣūl]*. For fear of making the book unduly lengthy, we have refrained from adducing all the evidence that could have been marshalled to prove the invalidity of every single school *[madhhab]* out of all the schools of thought among these erroneous sects. We have confined ourselves to the plain statement of their theological teachings, without elaboration, for the purpose of putting the reader on his guard against them.

May Allāh provide us—and you—with a refuge from the evil of these sectarian schools and their members, and may He let us die in accordance with Islām and the *Sunna*, belonging to the group that is sure of salvation *[al-firqat an-nājiya]*, through His Mercy!

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Water. Removal of traces of urine and excrement by means of—, 342. Cases where there is no alternative to the use of—, 343

This brings us to the conclusion of this section, which has been devoted to a concise and summary treatment of the articles of religious belief and the basic principles of Islamic jurisprudence and theology [*mā yataʿallaq bi'l-iʿtiqād wa'l-uṣūl*]. For fear of making the book unduly lengthy, we have refrained from adducing all the evidence that could have been marshalled to prove the invalidity of every single school [*madhhab*] out of all the schools of thought among these erroneous sects. We have confined ourselves to the plain statement of their theological teachings, without elaboration, for the purpose of putting the reader on his guard against them.

May Allāh provide us—and you—with a refuge from the evil of these sectarian schools and their members, and may He let us die in accordance with Islām and the *Sunna*, belonging to the group that is sure of salvation [*al-firqat an-nājiya*], through His Mercy!

Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth

[Al Ghunya li-Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq]

A COMPLETE RESOURCE ON THE INNER AND OUTER ASPECTS OF ISLAM

VOLUME TWO

SHAIKH 'ABD AL-QĀDIR AL-JĪLĀNĪ
TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC BY MUHTAR HOLLAND

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- That Allāh (Exalted is He) is not set apart in opposition to His creatures.
- That the scope of Allāh's effective power is not unlimited, so the people of the Garden of Paradise may be stranded forever in a state of immobility, while Allāh (Exalted is He) is unable to set them in motion, and since they are incapable of making themselves move. It is possible, however, for actions to be performed by the dead, the disabled and the decrepit.
- Abū Hudhail rejected the idea that Allāh (Exalted is He) has always been All-Hearing *[Samīʿ]*.

2. As for the Naẓẓāmiyya, their Shaikh an-Naẓẓām used to teach that inanimate bodies *[jamādāt]* are activated by the forces of nature. He used to deny the existence of accidents *[aʿrāḍ]*, with the exception of dependent motion *[ḥaraka iʿtimādiyya]*.

He maintained that the real human being is the spirit *[al-insān huwa'r-rūḥ]*, and that no one has seen the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), since all that anyone ever saw was his envelope *[ẓarf]*, meaning his physical body.

He made a radical break with the general consensus *[ijmāʿ]*, when he declared that if a person deliberately refrains from performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, even though he is reminded of it, he is not required to make it up later. He actually refused to recognize the infallibility of the general consensus of the Muslim community *[umma]*,[96] and allowed for the possibility that its members might agree to accept an untruth *[bāṭil]*.

He also maintained that faith *[īmān]* is the same thing as unbelief *[kufr]*, and that worshipful obedience *[ṭāʿa]* is the same thing as sinful disobedience *[maʿṣiya]*. He held that the conduct of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was no different from the conduct of Iblīs the accursed, and that the behavior of ʿUmar and ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with them both) was no different from the behavior of al-Ḥajjāj.[97] His emphasis on this theme, and his insistence on pursuing it, is less inexplicable than it may seem at first sight, because he often used to say: "All animate creatures are one single species *[al-ḥayawān kulluhu jins wāḥid]*."

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[96] In a well-known and frequently quoted tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) declared:

> My Community *[Ummatī]* will never agree on an error.

[97] The behavior of al-Ḥajjāj, as an early governor of ʿIrāq, was in fact notoriously harsh and brutal.

CHAPTER FIVE

A series of discourses *[majālis]* concerning the valuable lessons to be learned from the Qur'ān and the sayings of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

The First Discourse

Concerning the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He): When you recite the Qurʾān, seek refuge with Allāh from Satan the accursed.[1]

You should know that this verse *[āya]* occurs in *Sūrat an-Nahl* [The Bee], which is a Sūra belonging to the Meccan period, except for three verses at the end of it, which were revealed at Medina. Its verses add up to a total of one hundred and twenty-eight. It contains one thousand eight hundred and forty-one [Arabic] words, and exactly seven thousand seven hundred and nine letters [of the Arabic alphabet].

According to scholars well versed in Qur'ānic exegesis *[ahl at-tafsīr]*,[2] the occasion of the revelation of this verse was as follows:

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) recited *Sūrat an-Najm* [The Star], and he also recited [the Sūra[3] that begins:] "By the night when it enshrouds *[wa'l-laili idhā yaghshā]*," in the early morning ritual prayer *[salāt al-fajr]* at Mecca. He therefore performed the recitation of both these Sūras in a voice that was audible to the people present.[4]

When [in the course of reciting Sūrat an-Najm] he reached the verse in which Allāh says:

> Have you thought of *al-Lāt* and *al-'Uzzā*—and *Manāt* the third, the other? (53:19–20)[5]

—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) experienced a moment of drowsiness *[na'asa]*, whereupon Satan interjected into his recitation: "These are the exalted *gharānīq* (meaning the idols *[aṣnām]*); their intercession can be hoped for."[6]

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[1] *fa-idhā qara'ta'l-qur'āna fa-'sta'idh bi'llāhi mina'sh-shaiṭāni'r-rajīm.* (16:98)

[2] As defined by the Arabic lexicographers, the term *tafsīr* signifies "expounding, explaining, or interpreting the narratives *[qiṣaṣ]* that occur within the Qur'ān, and making known the significations of the strange words or expressions, and explaining the occasions on which the verses *[āyāt]* were revealed."

[3] *Sūrat al-Lail* [The Night]. This became Sūra 92 in the eventual compilation of the whole Qur'ān, the revelation of which was still at an early stage, of course, at the time of the incident described here.

[4] When conducting the early morning ritual prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]*, which consists of two cycles *[rak'atān]*, the Imām recites *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*, followed by another short Sūra, in each of the two cycles, and in a voice that is audible to the congregation.

The idolatrous polytheists *[mushrikūn]* were delighted to hear this, because they were firmly convinced that those idols of theirs were endowed with the power of intercession. They used to say: "These are our intercessors *[shufaʿāʾ]* in the presence of Allāh."

As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> [And those who choose protecting friends apart from Him, (say):] "We only serve them so that they may bring us close in nearness to Allāh." (39:3)[7]

They also used to maintain that they were pure bodies *[ajsām ṭāhira]*, free from any sins, and were therefore more worthy to be treated as objects of worshipful service *[ʿibāda]* than others, such as kings *[mulūk]* and angels *[malāʾika]*, since the latter are tainted with sins, and [cannot be pure bodies because] they are the possessors of souls or spirits *[dhawu'l-arwāḥ]*. Thus they likened the idols to the *gharānīq*—which are male birds (a single member of the species is called a *ghurnūq* or a *ghurnauq*)—because they rise up and fly very high in the sky.

According to some authorities, the *ghurnūq* or *ghurnauq* is a white bird, belonging to the aquatic family of birds. According to others, it is the crane *[kurkī]*. A very good-looking young man may also be referred to as a *ghurnūq*. The term occurs in this last sense in a traditional saying attributed to ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "So I seem to be looking at a *ghurnūq* (i.e., at a young man)[8] of [the tribe of] Quraish, who is wallowing in his blood."

According to Muqātil, the term *gharānīq* means the angels. He said: "They hoped that the angels would have a power of intercession *[shafāʿa]*, because a certain group among the unbelievers *[kuffār]* used to worship the angels."

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[5] *a-fa-raʾaitumu'l-Lāta wa'l-ʿUzzā—wa Manāta'th-thālithata'l-ukhrā*

[6] *tilka'l-gharānīqu'l-ʿulā—ʿindaha'sh-shafāʿatu turtajā.*

[7] *[wa'lladhīna 'ttakhadhū min dūnihi awliyāʾ]: mā naʿbuduhum illā li-yuqarribūnā ila'llāhi zulfā*

[8] According to the Arabic lexicographers, the singular form corresponding to the plural *gharānīq*, as applied to the bird, may be *ghurnaiq*, *ghurnūq*, or *ghirnauq*. These, as well as several other forms *[ghirnīq*, *ghirnaiq*, *gharaunaq* and *ghurānīq]*, may also be applied to "a tender youth, a youth white or fair, tender, having beautiful hair, and comely."

As far as the bird is concerned, it is variously described as: "a certain aquatic bird, long in the neck and in the legs, white [presumably the white stork, *ardea ciconia*] or black [presumably the black stork, *ardea nigra*], or the bird also known as the *kurkī* [Numidian crane, *ardea virgo*], or a certain bird resembling this." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. GH–R–N–Q.)

Well, to continue the story, when Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had come to the end of *[Sūrat] an-Najm*, he bowed down in prostration *[sajada]*, and all who were present prostrated themselves, Muslim and idol-worshipper *[mushrik]* alike. The only exception was al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīra; he was a very old man, so he picked up a handful of dust, raised it to his forehead and made his act of prostration upon it, saying: "We bend as the mother of Aiman bends, she and her female companions [in mourning]." (Aiman was a servant of the Prophet—Allāh bless him and give him peace—who was slain on the day of [the battle of] Ḥunain.)

These two sentences went straight to the heart of every polytheistic idol-worshipper *[mushrik]*, although they represented nothing but the rhyming prose *[saj']* of Satan and his mischief,[9] interjected by him into the recitation of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) at the point immediately following the reference to the false gods *[tawāghīth]* and the idols *[aṣnām]*. Both the two parties were amazed and delighted at their having performed the prostration all together, and at their having followed the lead of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in so doing.

As far as the Muslims were concerned, it came as a surprise to them to see the polytheistic idolaters *[mushrikūn]* performing the prostration *[sujūd]* in spite of their lack of faith *[īmān]* and certitude *[yaqīn]*.

As for the polytheistic idolaters, their feelings toward the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and his companions became very amicable. On hearing from him what Satan had interjected into his longing, they were overjoyed and said: "Muhammad has now come back to his first religion, the religion of his people." So they bowed in prostration to show their veneration for their gods *[āliha]*.

The two sentences soon spread far and wide among the people through Satan's broadcasting technique, until they reached as far as Abyssinia. This was a very serious problem for the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to him one evening and said: "May Allāh grant you protection from those two sentences. My Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) did not reveal them, nor did He instruct me to communicate them."

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[9] In Arabic, the two sentences—"These are the exalted *gharāniq [tilka'l-gharāniqu'l-'ulā]*," and "Their intercession can be hoped for *['innaha'sh-shafā'atu turtajā]*"—are constructed in rhyming prose *[saj']*.

As soon as Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) became aware of this, he was sorely troubled by it, and he said: "I have obeyed Satan. I have uttered his speech, and I have treated him as a partner in the business of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)." Allāh then annulled what Satan had interjected, and He revealed to His Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> We have not sent a Messenger or a Prophet before you without it happening that, when he experienced a longing, Satan cast suggestions into his longing. (22:52)[10]

That is to say, he interjected them into his reading and recitation.

> But Allāh will annul what Satan has suggested. Then Allāh will establish His revelations. Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (22:52)[11]

Now that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) had absolved His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) of all culpability for the rhyming prose [*saj'*] of Satan and his mischief, the polytheistic idolaters [*mushrikūn*] reverted to their errant ways and to their hostility toward the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and his companions. Then the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was commanded to make a practice of offering the prayer for Divine protection [*isti'ādha*], for Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) sent down to him the revelation:

> When you recite the Qur'ān, seek refuge with Allāh from Satan the accursed. (16:98)

According to 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father): "What this signifies is that, whenever you propose to recite the Qur'ān, you must say: 'I take refuge with Allāh from Satan the accursed [*a'ūdhu bi'llāhi mina'sh-shaiṭāni'r-rajīm*].' In other words: 'I take precautions [*aḥtarizu*] with Allāh against Satan the accursed,' i.e., against Iblīs the damned [*la'īn*], meaning the one who is cursed with damnation [*marjūm bi'l-la'na*]." For, as he also said, nothing is harder on Iblīs the damned than taking refuge [*ta'awwudh*] from him with Allāh:

> Surely he has no authority [*innahu laisa lahu sulṭānun*]

—in other words, no power of control [*mulk*]—

---

[10] *wa mā arsalnā min qablika min rasūlin wa lā nabiyyin illā idhā tamannā alqa'sh-shaiṭānu fī umniyyatih.*

[11] *fa-yansakhu'llāhu mā yulqi'sh-shaiṭānu thumma yuḥkimu'llāhu āyātih: wa'llāhu 'Alīmun Ḥakīm.*

> over those who believe and put all their trust in their Lord [*'ala'lladhīna āmanū wa 'alā Rabbihim yatawakkalūn*]. (16:99)

—in other words, those who place their full confidence in Allāh.

> His authority [*innamā sulṭānuhu*]

—meaning his power of control [*mulk*]—

> is only over those who take him for their friend [*'ala'lladhīna yatawallawnahu*]

—that is to say, those who take Iblīs the damned for their friend, so that they follow him in what he commands, and thus he leads them astray from their religion, from Islām—

> and those who ascribe partners to Him [*wa'lladhīna hum bihi mushrikūn*] (16:100)

—that is to say, those who ascribe partners to Allāh on Satan's behalf.

Concerning the meaning of the expression "I take refuge" *[a'ūdhu]*.[12]

What is signified by the expression "I take refuge" *[a'ūdhu]* may be explained as the act of seeking refuge *[isti'ādha]*,[13] asking for protection *[al-istijāra]*, and having recourse to a place of sanctuary or asylum *[iltijā']*.[14] The corresponding noun *ma'ādh* [place of refuge] is a synonym of *malja'* [place of retreat or refuge; shelter; sanctuary; asylum].

When using the third person masculine singular of the verb in the past tense, one says [in Arabic]: *'ādha bihi* [he took refuge with Him]. In the case of the third person masculine singular in the present/future tense, the verb takes the form *ya'ūdhu* [he takes/is taking/will take refuge]. The forms *'iyādh* and *'audh* both occur as the corresponding verbal noun or infinitive.

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[12] In order to grasp the full significance of many of the points discussed by Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) in this subsection, it is necessary to be aware of the basic structures of the Arabic language, especially the derivation of nouns, verbs and other parts of speech from 'roots' consisting (in the great majority of cases) of three consonants. The first such root to be considered here is made up of the consonant letters called *'ain*, *wāw* and *dhāl*, which are represented in the system of transliteration employed in this English rendering of the text by: 1. the sign ' ; 2. *w* ; 3. the combination *dh*.

Since the Arabic letter *wāw* is a so-called 'weak' letter, it disappears from certain derived forms of any root of which it is one of the three elements. Thus, in some of the words derived from the root *'–w–dh*, the central element may be 'hidden' in a long <ā> (represented by an *alif* in the Arabic script), a long <ū> (in which case the *wāw* is disguised in the transliteration, although it does appear in the original Arabic script), or it may have acquired the sound <y> or that of the long vowel <ī> (both represented by the Arabic letter *yā'*).

This should be borne in mind while reading this subsection, so that the reader will understand the linguistic and semantic connections between linking various terms discussed by the author, such as *a'ūdhu*, *isti'ādha*, *ma'ādh*, *'ādha*, *ya'ūdhu*, *'iyādh*, *'audh*, *'awwadh and u'īdhu*—all of which are derivatives of the root *'–w–dh*. (For a detailed listing of these and other words, phrases and sayings derived from this root, see E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *'–W–DH*.)

[13] Under the heading *al-isti'ādha*, traditional collections of Islamic prayers of supplication include many invocations of Divine protection from specific as well as general evils.

[14] Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has supplied numerous traditional prayers for the invocation of Divine refuge and protection.
(See pp. 42–43 below, also Vol. 1, pp. 15, 88–9, 338, 347–49, 358, 373 and 385–86.)

As for the expression *maʿādha'llāh*, which is also often used, it is another way of saying: "I resort to Him for protection *[aljaʾu ilaihi]* and I take refuge with Him *[aʿūdhu bihi]*."[15] Another related word is used when one says: "May this be a refuge *[ʿawadh]* for me from what I am afraid of." In other words: "May this be my protector *[mujīrī]* and my defender *[ad-dāfiʿ ʿannī]*."

The point of all this is that the servant [of the Lord] should take refuge with Allāh, so that He may keep him safe from the evil of Satan. To make a practice of taking refuge *[taʿawwudh]* in the Qurʾān[16] is to place oneself under its healing influence.

According to some authorities, the meaning of *istiʿādha* [seeking refuge] is *iḥtirāz* [taking precautions] with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). As Allāh (Exalted is He) has said, when relating the words spoken by the mother of Mary:

> [She said...:] "I place her under Your protection, and her offspring *[uʿīdhuhā bika wa dhurriyyatahā]*,
>
> —referring to Mary and [her son] Jesus—
>
> against Satan the accursed *[mina'sh-shaiṭāni'r-rajīm]*. (3:36)

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[15] According to the Arabic lexicographers, the expressions *maʿādha 'llāh* and *maʿādhata'llāh* and *maʿādha wajhi'llāh* and *maʿādhata wajhi'llāh* and *ʿiyādha'llāh* all convey the same meaning, namely, *aʿūdhu bi'llāhi maʿādhan* [I take refuge with Allāh], which is equivalent to the saying: "May Allāh protect me," or "May Allāh preserve me." The exclamation *maʿādha'llāh* may often be heard in circumstances where an English speaker would be likely to say "God forbid!"

[16] Sura 113 ('The Daybreak' *[al-Falaq]*) and Sura 114 ('Mankind' *[an-Nās]*), the last two Suras in the Qurʾān, are known as *al-Muʿawwidhatān* [the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge]. They read as follows:

In the Name of Allāh, All-Merciful	*Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-*
and Compassionate.	*Raḥīm*.
Say: "I take refuge with	*qul aʿūdhu*
the Lord of the Daybreak	*bi-Rabbi'l-falaq—*
from the evil of what He has created,	*min sharri mā khalaq—*
from the evil of the darkness	*wa min sharri ghāsiqin*
when it is intense,	*idhā waqab—*
from the evil of the witches	*wa min sharri'n-naffāthāti*
who blow on knots,	*fi'l-ʿuqad—*
and from the evil of the envier	*wa min sharri ḥāsidin*
when he envies."	*idhā ḥasad*.
In the Name of Allāh, All-Merciful	*Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-*
and Compassionate.	*Raḥīm*.
Say: "I take refuge with	*qul aʿūdhu*
the Lord of mankind,	*bi-Rabbi'n-nās—*
the King of mankind,	*Maliki'n-nās—*
the God of mankind,	*Ilāhi'n-nās—*
from the evil of the	*min sharri'l-*
slinking whisperer,	*waswāsi'l-khannās—*
who whispers in	*alladhī yuwaswisu fī*
the breasts of mankind,	*ṣudūri'n-nās—*
of the jinn and of mankind."	*mina'l-jinnati wa'n-nās*.

—in other words: "I take the precaution of looking to Allāh on behalf of the pair of them for protection from Satan the accursed."

As for the etymology of *ash-Shaiṭān* [Satan; the Devil], the name is derived from the same root, *sh-ṭ-n*, as the common noun *shaṭan*, meaning a long and strongly twisted rope. The corresponding verbal noun or infinitive, *shaṭn*, is a synonym for *buʿd* [to be remote; to keep one's distance]. The linguistic implication, therefore, is that he keeps himself at a very great distance from all that is good, while he stretches far into all that is evil and is intensely involved in it.

Then again, a human being may sometimes be referred to as a devil *[shaiṭān]*; that is to say, as someone who is like the Devil *[ash-Shaiṭān]* in his conduct and behavior. As a matter of fact, everything that is *mustaqbah* [that is considered ugly, repugnant, repulsive, ignominious, infamous, shameful, disgraceful, foul, vile, base, mean, etc.] can be likened to the Devil. One may say, for instance: "So and so has a face like the face of the Devil, and his head is like the Devil's head." One such comparison is made in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), when He says:

> [It is a tree that comes forth in the root of Hell;] its spathes are as it were the heads of devils *[ruʾūsu'sh-shayāṭīn]*. (37:65)

The reference here is probably to the well-known [image people have of the] Devil's head *[ra's ash-shaiṭān al-maʿrūf]*.[17] According to some authorities, however, it applies to certain snakes, which have repulsive heads and manes *[aʿrāf]*, while others have pointed out that "Devils' heads" *[ruʾūsu'sh-shayāṭīn]* is the name of a common plant.

As for the epithet *ar-rajīm* [the accursed], this is applied to the Devil because he is the one who has been cursed with damnation *[marjūm bi'l-laʿna]*. That is to say, Allāh (Exalted is He) has cursed him with damnation and has driven him into exile, far from the Divine Presence *[Ḥaḍra]*, as a punishment for his sinful disobedience in refusing to bow down in prostration before Adam (peace be upon him). The angels also cursed him by pelting him with gravestones *[rijām]*, with which they then proceeded to chase him out of heaven and down to the earth below. Then the stars *[kawākib]* were provided as missiles *[rujūm]* to be thrown at him.

---

[17] As noted by the Arabic lexicographers, "though the *shaiṭān* is not seen, he is conceived in the mind as the foulest, or ugliest, of things." (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *SH–Ṭ–N*.)

So he and his offspring will be pelted with the stars and cursed with damnation until the Final Hour is at hand. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> [And we have adorned the lower heaven with lamps] and We have made them missiles to be thrown at the devils *[wa ja'alnāhā rujuman li'sh-shayāṭīn]*. (65:7)

Concerning the remoteness of Satan from Allāh and from all that is good.

Satan *[ash-Shaiṭān]* is far removed from Allāh, distant from all that is good, remote from the Garden of Paradise and close to the Fire of Hell. This is why Allāh has commanded His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and all decent members of his Community to make a practice of praying for refuge *[ta'awwudh]* from Satan the accursed, who is far from the All-Merciful One *[ar-Raḥmān]*, so that they may keep their distance from the Fires of Hell and draw close to the Gardens of Paradise, and so that they may look upon the Face of the King and Judge *[al-Malik ad-Dayyān]*.[18]

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) is saying, in effect: "O my servant, Satan is far removed from Me, while you are close to Me. You must therefore be on your best behavior in order to preserve the right spiritual state *[ḥāl]*, so that Satan will not gain access to you by any means at all."

To be on our best behavior means that we must carry out the Divine commandments and observe the Divine prohibitions, and that we must be content to accept the course of destiny *[jarayān al-maqdūr]* as it affects us personally and as it affects our property, our family, our children and all the creatures in the universe.

Provided that the servant [of Allāh] can keep this up, that he can stick to it, persevere in it with diligence, and hold on to it with a firm embrace, he will enjoy salvation from the mischievous temptations

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[18] In his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Imām al-Bukhārī has recorded a traditional report, complete with its chain of transmitting authorities *[isnād]*, according to which 'Abdullāh ibn Anas (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that he once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> Allāh (Glory be to Him) will gather all His servants at the Resurrection, when He will summon them by calling out, in a voice that will be heard by those who are far away, just as clearly as it is heard by those who are close at hand: "I am the King *[Ana'l-Malik]*! I am the Judge *[Ana'd-Dayyān]*!"

[fitan] of the Devil and his insinuations *[waswās]*, as well as from the unworthy promptings and destructive tendencies of the lower self *[nafs]*, from the torment of the tomb and its suffocating pressure, from the terror and violence of the Resurrection, and from the agony and the groaning distress *[zafra]*[19] of the Fire of Hell. He will be in the vicinity of Allāh in the Garden of the Safe Resort *[Jannat al-Ma'wā]*,[20] in the company of "the Prophets, the champions of truth, the martyrs and the righteous—and the best of company are they!"[21] There he will have the bountiful blessings of Allāh at his disposal under every circumstance, and there he will abide for ever and ever. As Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> As for My servants, you shall have no authority over any of them, [except those who follow you, being perverse]. (15:42)[22]

It must follow, therefore, that when the servant is wearing the badge of servitude *[sīmat al-'ubūdiyya]* to the King Most High *[al-Malik al-A'lā]*, it will not be possible for Satan the weak, the vile and the most inferior, to gain the upper hand over him and subject him to trial and tribulation—neither in a public setting nor when he is alone in private, and neither by influencing his heart toward committing an act of sinful disobedience when he is considering some course of action, nor by affecting the limbs of his physical body when they are on the verge of stumbling and falling to their ruin. At that very moment of peril, he will hear the cry: "This is how We treat someone who refuses to give in to his whims and passions *[hawā]*, and who follows the Truth *[Ḥaqq]* and is guided by it." The Assembly [of Angels] on High *[al-Mal'a al-A'lā]* will be engaged in a heated debate about him, as he is summoned by the Almighty *[al-'Aẓīm]* to the Kingdom Most High *[al-Malakūt al-A'lā]*, and the King Most High *[al-Malik al-A'lā]* will speak of him in glowing terms—upon the

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[19] According to the Arabic lexicographers, the word *zafra* means: A drawing in of the breath to the utmost, by reason of distress; a drawing-back of the breath so vehemently that the ribs become swollen out; or, an emission of the breath with a prolonged sigh or groan. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Z–F–R*.)

[20] An allusion to Qur'ān (53:15). According to various authors of Qur'ānic commentaries, the meaning of *Jannat al-Ma'wā* is: "The paradise to which repair the souls of the martyrs, or the pious, or the angels, or that in which the night is passed." (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. '–W–Y.)

[21] The words within inverted commas are from the Qur'ān (4:69): *an-nabiyyīna wa'ṣ-ṣiddīqīna wa'sh-shuhadā'i wa'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn: wa ḥasuna ulā'ika rafīqā*.

[22] *inna 'ibādī laisa laka 'alaihim sulṭānun [illā mani'ttaba'aka mina'l-ghāwīn]*.

Throne [*'Arsh*], for He has firmly established Himself thereon[23]—in His Eternally Pre-Existent Speech [*bi-Kalāmihi'l-Qadīm*], safeguarded from the rhyming prose [*saj'*] of Satan and all falsehood in the recitation of the reciter when he recites [*'inda qirā'ati'l-qāri'i idhā qara'a*]:

> Thus it was, that We might ward off from him evil and foul abomination; he was surely one of Our devoted servants. (12:24)[24]

For such a servant is surely most righteously devoted to his duty, both in secret and in public.

To flee from Satan the accursed and from his beckoning call is therefore by far the better and more preferable course, since the warning has come down from the All-High, the Most High [*al-'Aliyy al-'Alā*], inasmuch as He has said:

> Surely Satan is an enemy to you; so treat him as an enemy. He summons his party only that they may be among the inhabitants of the blazing inferno. (35:6)[25]
>
> And yet he has led a great multitude of you astray; so did you not have any sense [of what you were getting yourselves into]? (36:62)[26]

For obedience to Satan is the root of all trouble and distress, whereas opposition to him is the basis of good fortune and bliss, of comfort and right guidance, and of eternal life in the abode of perpetuity [*dār al-baqā'*].

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[23] An allusion to the verse [*āya*] of the Qur'ān in which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has declared:

> The All-Merciful has firmly established Himself upon the Throne [*ar-Raḥmānu 'ala'l-'arshi 'stawā*]. (20:5)

[24] *ka-dhālika li-naṣrifa 'anhu's-sū'a wa'l-faḥshā'. innahu min 'ibādina'l-mukhlaṣīn.*

[25] *inna'sh-shaiṭāna lakum 'aduwwun fa-'ttakhidhūhu 'aduwwā: innamā yad'ū ḥizbahu li-yakūnū min aṣḥābi's-sa'īr.*

[26] *wa-la-qad aḍalla minkum jibillan kathīrā: a-fa-lam takūnū ta'qilūn.*

Concerning the five benefits that accrue to the servant of Allāh from seeking refuge *[isti'ādha]* with Him.

Five benefits accrue to the servant of Allāh from seeking refuge *[isti'ādha]* with Him, namely the following:

1. Firm and constant adherence to the true religion and to right guidance *[ath-thabāt 'ala'd-dīn wa'l-hudā]*.
2. Salvation from the evil of [Satan] the damned and from trouble and distress *[as-salāma mina'l-la'īn wa'l-'anā']*.
3. Gaining admittance to the impregnable fortress and access to the nearness [of the Divine Protector] *[ad-dukhūl fi'l-ḥiṣn al-ḥaṣīn wa'z-zulfā]*.[27]
4. Attaining to the secure station[28] in the company of the Prophets, the champions of truth, the martyrs and the righteous *[al-wuṣūl ila'l-maqāmi'l-amīni ma'a'n-nabiyyīna wa's-ṣiddīqīna wa'sh-shuhadā'i wa's-ṣāliḥīn]*.
5. Obtaining the help and support of the Lord of the earth and the heaven *[nail ma'ūnati Rabbi'l-arḍ wa's-samā']*.

As the story is told in some of the previous [pre-Qur'ānic] Books of Scripture, when Iblīs the damned, addressing his words to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), said:

> Then I shall come upon them from in front of them and from behind them, from their right hands and from their left hands. (7:17)[29]

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[27] According to at least one Arabic lexicographer, *zulfā* may be a plural of *zulfa*, when the latter is used adjectivally in the sense of *qarīb* [near, close]. It is more commonly regarded, however, as a quasi-infinitive noun, meaning either "station, rank, degree" or "bringing very near." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Z–L–F*.) The word occurs in several verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān, including:

> And those who choose protecting friends apart from Him, (say): "We only serve them so that they may bring us close in nearness to Allāh" *[wa'lladhīna'ttakhadhū min dūnihi awliyā' mā na'buduhum illā li-yuqarribūnā ila'llāhi zulfā]*. (39:3)

[28] An allusion to the Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*:

> Surely those who were devoted to their duty shall be in a station secure *[inna'l-muttaqīna fī maqāmin amīn]*. (44:51)

[29] *thumma la-ātiyannahum min baini aidīhim wa min khalfihim wa 'an aimānihim wa 'an shamā'ilihim.*

—Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) said in reply:

> By My Might and My Majesty, I shall surely command them to appeal [to Me] for refuge, and then, when they seek refuge with Me, I shall protect them from the right with guidance, from the left with providential care, from behind with invulnerability, and from in front with invincible support, so that your devilish insinuation can never harm them, O damned one![10]

Among the traditional sayings *[aḥādīth]* handed down to us from Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), there is one in which the following words are attributed to him:

> If someone prays just once for refuge with Allāh, Allāh (Exalted is He) will keep him safe throughout the whole of the day in which he makes that plea.[11]

He also said (blessing and peace be upon him):

> Lock the doors of sinful disobedience by offering the prayer for refuge with Allāh *[bi'l-isti'ādha]*, and open the doors of worshipful obedience by invoking the Name of Allāh *[bi't-tasmiya]*.[12]

It has been said that Iblīs[13] sends out three hundred and sixty soldiers, on a daily basis, with the mission of leading the believer *[mu'min]* astray. But then, if the believer seeks refuge with Allāh, Allāh casts three hundred and sixty glances into his heart, and every one of those glances of His results in a fatal casualty for one of the soldiers of the Devil, may Allāh doom him to damnation!

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[10] *wa 'Izzatī wa Jalālī la-āmurannahum bi'l-isti'ādha: fa-idhā 'sta'ādhū bī ḥafiẓtuhum 'ani'l-yamīni bi'l-hidāyati wa 'ani'sh-shimāli bi'l-'ināyati wa 'ani'l-khalfi bi'l-'iṣmati wa 'ani'l-quddāmi bi'n-nuṣra: ḥattā lā taḍurrahum waswasatuka yā mal'ūn.*

[11] *mani 'sta'ādha bi'llāhi marratan ḥafiẓahu'llāhu—ta'ālā—fī yawmihi dhālik.*

[12] In other words, by saying: "*Bismi'llāh* [In the Name of Allāh]."

[13] Iblīs is the personal name of the Devil. Some Western scholars consider it to be an arabicized version of the Greek *diabolos*, but the Arab philologists derive it from the root *b–l–s*, on the grounds that Iblīs "has nothing to expect *[ublisa]* from the mercy of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)." He is also called *ash-Shaiṭān* [Satan, the Devil], *'aduwu Allāh* [the enemy of God] or simply *al-'aduwu* [the Enemy]. Unlike the English word Satan, however, *ash-Shaiṭān* is not strictly speaking a proper name, as A.J. Wensinck points out in his article IBLIS in the *SEI*. (See also: T.P. Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, art. DEVIL).

Concerning the things which Satan dreads, and against which he is always on his guard.

The things which Satan dreads, and against which he is ever on his guard, are: The prayer for Divine refuge *[istiʿādha]* and the rays of the light of intimate knowledge in the hearts of those who know through direct spiritual experience *[shuʿāʿ nūr maʿrifa qulūb al-ʿārifīn]*.

So, if you are not yet one of those who are spiritually aware, you must make it your practice to offer the prayer for Divine refuge, following the example of those who are devout in the performance of their religious duties, until you progress to the stage of development attained by those who know through direct spiritual experience.

From that point on, the rays of the light of your heart will shatter his offensive power and put his troops to flight. They will destroy all his flourishing tentacles and extirpate his malignant tumor, as far as you personally are concerned. It may also happen that you will be put in charge of his imprisonment, for the sake of your brothers *[ikhwān]* and your followers, just as it happened in the case of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him). The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> The Devil runs away from your shadow, O ʿUmar!

and:

> Whenever ʿUmar travels along a particular valley, the Devil always chooses a different valley for his own journey!

It has been said that the Devil used to suffer an epileptic fit whenever he caught sight of ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him). It is safe to assume, therefore, that when the Devil recognizes sincerity *[ṣidq]* on the part of a servant [of the Lord] in his hostility toward him and in his opposition to his summons, he will despair of that individual, treat him as a lost cause, and focus his attention on somebody else. He will still approach him from time to time, however, sneaking up on him in disguise like a furtive thief, so the servant [of the Lord] must stick to his sincerity; he must remain vigilant and be ever on the watch in order to detect the approach of Satan and his cunning devices, for his probing instrument *[mithqab]* is very subtle, his animosity is primeval and fundamental, and he makes inroads through the skin and the flesh as blood flows through the veins.

We know of a traditional report to the effect that Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to say, after he had reached his senior years: "O Allāh, I take refuge with You from the possibility that I might perpetrate an unlawful sexual act or murder." When people asked him if he could really be afraid of that kind of thing, he would reply: "How can I not be afraid, as long as Iblīs is still alive?"

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Concerning the most effective ways of seeking help in order to combat the Devil and keep him at bay.

For the purpose of waging war against the Devil and keeping him at bay, the most effective ways of seeking help are: (1) to utter the statement of sincere devotion *[kalimat al-ikhlāṣ]*,[34] and (2) for a man to remember his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He).

As the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has reported the words of his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He):[35]

> "*Lā ilāha illa'llāh* [There is no god but Allāh]" is My fortress, so anyone who says these words will enter My fortress. And anyone who enters My fortress is surely safe from My torment.

The Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) has also said:

> Anyone who says "*Lā ilāha illa'llāh* [There is no god but Allāh]," and who says it sincerely, will enter the Garden of Paradise.

The Devil is the cause of the torment [inflicted by Allāh], so when the servant [of the Lord] pronounces the statement [of sincere belief], and when he clothes himself with its necessary consequences by observing the Divine commandments and prohibitions, the Devil, seeing him wrapped up in all that, will keep his distance from him and will not approach him. The servant will thus be saved from Satan's mischievous temptation, just as he would be saved from the weapons of his enemy by a coat of armor worn in battle.

Similar protection is afforded by frequent invocation of the Name of Allāh, as we know from the traditional account of the following incident: The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once

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[34] The affirmation of Divine Unity: "*Lā ilāha illa'llāh* [There is no god but Allāh]."

[35] That is to say, in a Sacred Tradition *[Ḥadīth Qudsī]*, not a verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān.

On the desirability of giving commands and prohibitions in a private context whenever possible.

The most appropriate course for a person to take, when he proposes to tell someone else what is right and what is wrong, is that he should find an opportunity to convey these instructions in a private context *[khalwa]*, if it is at all possible for him to do so. The advantages of this approach are that it is more immediate, that it is more effective in communicating spiritual counsel *[mawʿiẓa]*, stern admonition *[zajr]* and sincere advice *[naṣīḥa]*, and that it is more likely to result in the acceptance of what is right and the renunciation of what is wrong.

As Abu'd-Dardā' (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once put it: "When someone preaches to his brother in public, he is exposing him to disgrace *[shānahu]*, but when someone offers him spiritual counsel in private, he is blessing him with grace *[zānahu]*."

If the person concerned has attempted this [private approach], but it has not yielded any positive results, he must then proceed to do his duty in the public forum. In order to accomplish his task, he should try to enlist the support of ordinary good folk *[ahl al-khair]*, and then, if this does not work, he may apply to the people in power *[aṣḥāb as-sulṭān]* for assistance. The active condemnation of what is wrong and unfair *[inkār al-munkar]* must never be totally abandoned, because Allāh (Exalted is He) sternly rebuked a society of people who had in fact abandoned it, and who had come to regard it as unimportant. He said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> They would not try to prevent one another from doing anything wrong that they did; evil indeed were the things they used to do! (5:79)[143]

He has also said (Exalted is He):

> Why is it that the rabbis and the priests do not forbid their utterance of sin and their consumption of illicit gain? Evil indeed is their handiwork. (5:63)[144]

[143] *kānū lā yatanāhauna ʿan munkarin faʿalūh—la-biʾsa mā kānū yafʿalūn.*

[144] *lau lā yanhāhumu'r-rabbāniyyūna wa'l-aḥbāru ʿan qaulihimu'l-ithma wa aklihimu's-suḥt—la-biʾsa mā kānū yaṣnaʿūn.*

As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> And he whose sight is dim to the remembrance of the All-Merciful, to him We assign a devil who becomes his comrade. (43:36)[38]

There will be times when that devil whispers his evil suggestions to him during his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. At other times he will excite him with futile desires, arousing all the appetites of the lower self, those that are strictly unlawful as well as those that are ordinarily permissible. There will also be times when he persuades him to hold back from prompt participation in good causes, from performing the customary and necessary religious duties *[as-sunan wa'l-wājibāt]*, from acts of worship and righteous deeds *[al-'ibādāt wa'l-qurubāt]*. Thus he will lose both this world and the hereafter, and will eventually be resurrected in his [devil's] company.

It may happen that his devil-comrade will deprive him of his faith *[īmān]* at the very end of his life, so that he will be doomed on the Day of Resurrection to dwell with him for all eternity in the Fire of Hell, in the company of Pharaoh and Hārūn and Qārūn.

We take refuge with Allāh from the deprivation of faith, and from obediently following the Devil both in secret and in public.[39]

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[38] *wa man ya'shu 'an dhikri'r-Raḥmāni nuqayyid lahu shaiṭānan fa-huwa lahu qarīn.*

[39] *na'ūdhu bi'llāhi min salbi'l-īmān wa mutāba'ati'sh-shaiṭāni fi's-sirri wa'l-i'lān.*

The sons of Satan who oversee the sons of Adam [mankind], according to a traditional report handed down from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

According to a traditional report handed down to us from Muqātil, on the authority of az-Zuhrī, who transmitted it on the authority of ʿUrwa, the following account was originally given by ʿĀ'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her):

The Companions of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) set out one evening, hoping to spend some time together with Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). Included in their group were Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān, ʿAlī, Salmān and ʿAmmār ibn Yāsir (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with each and every one of them). Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) did step out of doors to meet them, despite the fact that he was suffering from a bad case of *ar-ruhaḍā'* (i.e., the heavy sweat caused by the fever). The beads of sweat were dripping from him like *jumān* (another word for *lu'lu'* [pearls]). Then, when he had wiped his brow, he said:

> May Allāh damn the accursed one *[la'ana'llāhu'l-mal'ūn]*!

He said this three times over, then he lowered his head and fell silent, so ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said to him: "Let my father be your ransom, and my mother too! Whom were you damning just a moment ago?" The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said in reply:

> The wicked Iblīs, the enemy of Allāh, inserted his tail into his own backside, and then laid seven eggs. Such was the origin of his sons, who have been charged with the task of overseeing the sons of Adam. Their names and their particular areas of responsibility are as follows:
>
> 1. *al-Mudhish*. He is the one who has been entrusted with the task of overseeing the learned scholars *['ulamā']*, whose attention he diverts into whimsical excursions of various kinds.

On the Jahmiyya [and other subsects of the Murji'a].

As for the Jahmiyya, their name and origin can be traced to Jahm ibn Ṣafwān,[72] who used to state his doctrine in the following terms: "Faith is neither more nor less than the acknowledgment of Allāh and His Messenger, and of everything that has come to us [by way of revelation] from His presence."[73] They profess the following doctrines:

- That the Qur'ān is a product of creation *[makhlūq]*.
- That Allāh (Exalted is He) did not speak to Moses.
- That Allāh (Exalted is He) did not speak and did not see.
- That He is not known to have any particular location *[makān]*; He possesses neither Throne *['arsh]* nor Pedestal *[kursī]*, and He is not "upon the Throne."
- They refuse to accept the reality of the [weighing of deeds in] the scales *[mawāzīn]*, and of the torment of the tomb.
- They refuse to accept that the Garden of Paradise and the Fire of Hell are products of creation, and claim that if they have been created they must eventually cease to exist.
- They maintain that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will neither speak to His creatures nor look at them on the Day of Resurrection, and that the inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise will neither look at Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) nor see Him therein.
- They maintain that faith *[īmān]* is an affair of the heart, which does not require confirmation by the tongue.

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[72] Jahm ibn Ṣafwān Abū Muḥriz, a client of the Banū Rāsib, called at-Tirmidhī by some and as-Samarqandī by others. He attached himself to Ḥārith ibn Suraij, known as "the man with the black banner", during the uprisings that broke out in the province of Khurāsān toward the end of the Umayyad period, and was put to death in A.H. 128/745-6 C.E. by Salm ibn Aḥwaz. His followers, called Jahmiyya after him, survived down to the 5th (11th) century in the vicinity of Tabrīz, but then adopted the doctrines of the Ash'ariyya. (See anonymous article DJAHM, in *SEI*.)

[73] *al-īmānu huwa'l-ma'rifatu bi'llāhi wa rasūlihi wa jamī'i mā jā'a min 'indihi faqat.*

> You must keep very close to one another in the ranks [when you line up to pray in congregation], so that the Devil cannot find a gap through which to slip in between you. You must stick as closely together as the daughters of *jadaf*.

When people asked, "And what are the 'daughters of *jadaf*'?" Abū Ḥudhaifa said that, according to Abū 'Ubaida, they are those little sheep from the region of the Ḥijāz. One of them by itself is called a *jadafa*.[41] They are also known as *naqad*.[42] Some say that they have neither tails nor ears, and that they are imported from Jarash, a town in the Yemen.

According to a traditional report, it was 'Uthmān ibn Abu'l-'Āṣ (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who made the following statement: "I said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, what is he like, the devil who intervenes between me and my ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* and my recitation of the Qur'ān?' He responded (Allāh bless him and give him peace) by saying:

> That particular devil is called *Khanzab*. When you feel aware of his presence, you must take refuge *[ta'awwadh]* from him with Allāh. You should also spit three times to your left."

'Uthmān ibn Abu'l-'Āṣ (may Allāh be well pleased with him) went on to say: "I acted on this advice, and Allāh did cause that devil to go away and leave me."

In the well-known tradition *[hadīth mashhūr]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> There is not a single one amongst you who does not have a devil of his own.[43]

People asked: "Not even you, O Messenger of Allāh?", so he responded (Allāh bless him and give him peace) by saying:

> Not even I. The only difference is that Allāh (Hallowed and Exalted is He) has helped me against him, and so I am safe.[44]

In yet another traditional account, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> There is not a single one of you who does not have a comrade from among the jinn, assigned to oversee him personally.[45]

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[41] Or perhaps it should be read as *jadfa*. Since this meaning of the word is not listed in the dictionaries, it is impossible to be certain of the correct vowelling. The Arabic text shows only the consonantal outline: *j–d–f* for the plural or collective form, with the addition of *tā' marbūṭa* in the case of the singular.

[42] According to the Arabic lexicographers, *naqad* is a collective term for "a kind of sheep, of ugly form, a kind of sheep of al-Bahrain, having short legs and ugly faces, or a kind of small sheep of al-Ḥijāz, or, simply, lambs." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *N–Q–D*.)

Concerning the most effective ways of seeking help in order to combat the Devil and keep him at bay.

For the purpose of waging war against the Devil and keeping him at bay, the most effective ways of seeking help are: (1) to utter the statement of sincere devotion *[kalimat al-ikhlāṣ]*,[34] and (2) for a man to remember his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He).

As the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has reported the words of his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He):[35]

> "*Lā ilāha illa'llāh* [There is no god but Allāh]" is My fortress, so anyone who says these words will enter My fortress. And anyone who enters My fortress is surely safe from My torment.

The Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) has also said:

> Anyone who says "*Lā ilāha illa'llāh* [There is no god but Allāh]," and who says it sincerely, will enter the Garden of Paradise.

The Devil is the cause of the torment [inflicted by Allāh], so when the servant [of the Lord] pronounces the statement [of sincere belief], and when he clothes himself with its necessary consequences by observing the Divine commandments and prohibitions, the Devil, seeing him wrapped up in all that, will keep his distance from him and will not approach him. The servant will thus be saved from Satan's mischievous temptation, just as he would be saved from the weapons of his enemy by a coat of armor worn in battle.

Similar protection is afforded by frequent invocation of the Name of Allāh, as we know from the traditional account of the following incident: The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once

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[34] The affirmation of Divine Unity: "*Lā ilāha illa'llāh* [There is no god but Allāh]."

[35] That is to say, in a Sacred Tradition *[Ḥadīth Qudsī]*, not a verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān.

On carrying a copy of the Qurʾān *[muṣḥaf]* when traveling in territory controlled by the enemies of Islām.

It is considered inappropriate to carry a copy of the Qurʾān *[muṣḥaf]* when embarking on an expedition into territory controlled by the enemy, because there is a risk of its falling into the hands of those who attribute partners to Allāh *[al-mushrikūn]*.[61]

This does not apply when the Muslims are [on the move] in conspicuous strength and might, and represent an overwhelming force. It then becomes permissible to take a copy of the Book along on the journey, so that the traveler may read from it and and not become forgetful of the Qurʾan.

[61] For an earlier mention of this same point, see p. 94 above.

Benefactor [*Mannān*] has rewarded them in accordance with the declaration He has made in the Qur'ān:

> Therefore Allāh has warded off from them the evil of that day, and He has caused them to find radiance and gladness. And He has recompensed them for all that they have patiently endured, with a Garden and with garments of silk. (76:11,12)[47]

And in His words (Exalted is He):

> Surely the righteous shall dwell amid gardens and a river, in a sure abode, in the presence of a King All-Powerful. (54:54,55)[48]

He has also said (Exalted is He):

> But for him who fears the standing before his Lord there shall be two gardens. (55:46)[49]

What is more, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has made mention in this Book of His of the servant who is exposed to temptation [*maftūn*] after his conversion to pious devotion [*taqwā*], for He has said (Exalted is He):

> As for the righteous, when a visitation from the devil disturbs them, they have only to remember [the guidance of their Lord], and then they see clearly. (7:201)[50]

Thus He (Almighty and Glorious is He) has given us to understand that the way to polish our hearts [*jalā' al-qulūb*] is through the remembrance of Allāh, for this is how they lose their coating of darkness, rust and neglect, and this is how troubles and cares are cleared away. Remembrance [*dhikr*] is the key to pious devotion [*taqwā*] and cautious restraint [*wara'*], and pious devotion is the gateway to the hereafter, just as passionate desire [*hawā*] is the gateway to this world. As Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> [Hold fast to that which We have given you] and remember what is in it, for then you may do your duty well. (2:63)[51]

Thus Allāh (Hallowed and Exalted is He) has given us to understand that, through remembrance [*dhikr*], the human being will come to be devoted to his duty.

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[47] *fa-waqāhumu'llāhu sharra dhālika'l-yawmi wa laqqāhum naḍratan wa surūrā—wa jazāhum bi-mā ṣabarū jannatan was ḥarīrā.*

[48] *inna'l-muttaqīna fī jannātin wa nahar—fī maq'adi ṣidqin 'inda Malīkin Muqtadir.*

[49] *wa li-man khāfa maqāma Rabbihi jannatān.*

[50] *inna'lladhīna'ttaqau idhā massahum ṭā'ifun mina'sh-shaiṭāni tadhakkarū fa-idhāhum mubṣirūn.*

[51] *[khudhū mā ātainākum bi-quwwatin] wa'dhkurū mā fīhi la'allakum tattaqūn.*

Concerning the two tremors *[lammatān]* that are felt within the heart.

Two tremors *[lammatān]* are experienced within the heart. One tremor, which comes from the King *[Malik]*, is the promise of all that is good and the confirmation of the truth. The other tremor, which comes from the enemy [i.e., from Satan] is the threat of all that is evil, the denial of the truth, and the rejection of all that is good.

This version of this traditional report has been handed down to us on the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

As explained in the words of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him):

"These two [tremors] are actually two feelings of concern *[hammān]* which preoccupy the attention of the heart. One of these feelings of concern comes from Allāh, while the other comes from the Enemy. So Allāh bestows His mercy on a servant who concentrates on His concern, who gives effect to that which comes from Allāh, and who struggles to combat whatever comes from His enemy."

Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) offered an interpretation of the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> [Say: "I take refuge with the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the God of mankind] from the evil of the slinking whisperer." (114:1–4)[52]

According to Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him):

"This means that Satan likes to make himself comfortably at home in the heart of the human being. When someone remembers Allāh, he slinks away and feels ill at ease, but whenever a person becomes forgetful, he stretches himself out in comfort over his heart."

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[50] *inna'lladhīna'ttaqaw idhā massahum ṭā'ifun mina'sh-shaiṭāni tadhakkarū fa-idhāhum mubṣirūn.*

[51] *[khudhū mā ātainākum bi-quwwatin] wa'dhkurū mā fīhi la'allakum tattaqūn.*

[52] *[qul: a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi'n-nās—Maliki'n-nās—Ilāhi'n-nās]—min sharri'l-waswāsi'l-khannās.*

In the words of Muqātil (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "He [the slinking whisperer] is the Devil in the shape of a pig *[khinzīr]*, attached to the heart within the physical body of the son of Adam [i.e., the human being], where he infiltrates himself as smoothly as the flow of the blood. Allāh has given him control over that human being. Such is the import of His words (Exalted is He):

> [The slinking whisperer] who whispers in the breasts of men. (114:5)[53]

Thus, when the son of Adam becomes absentminded, the Devil insinuates his suggestions into his heart, until he swallows up his heart completely. He is called the Slinker *[khannās]* because, when the son of Adam remembers Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), he slinks away *[khanasa]* from his heart, leaves it and makes his exit from that person's physical body."

According to ʿIkrima (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "In the case of a man, the Whisperer *[waswās]* has his place of lodging in his pericardium *[fuʾād]* and his eyes. In the case of a woman, however, his place of lodging is in her eyes when she is moving forward, and in her buttocks when she turns her back."

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[53] *alladhī yuwaswisu fī ṣudūri'n-nāsi.*

Concerning the six 'notions' *[khawāṭir]* that may arise within the human heart.

The 'notions' *[khawāṭir]* that may arise within the human heart are six in number, namely:

1. The notion of the lower self *[khāṭir an-nafs]*.
2. The notion of the Devil *[khāṭir ash-Shaiṭān]*.
3. The notion of the spirit *[khāṭir ar-rūḥ]*.
4. The notion of the angel *[khāṭir al-malak]*.
5. The notion of the mind/intellect *[khāṭir al-'aql]*.
6. The notion of certainty *[khāṭir al-yaqīn]*.

Let us now proceed to consider the rôle and *modus operandi* of each of these six notions:

- The rôle of the notion of the lower self *[khāṭir an-nafs]* is to instruct the person in whom it arises to accept the demands of the carnal appetites *[shahawāt]* and to follow the promptings of passionate desire *[hawā]*, regardless of whether the objects of such desire are classed [in Islamic law] as indifferently permissible *[mubāḥ]* or as sinful and strictly prohibited *[ḥaraj]*.
- The rôle of the notion of the Devil *[khāṭir ash-Shaiṭān]* is primarily to instruct the person in whom it arises to commit the fundamental sins of *kufr* [unbelief] and *shirk* [associating partners with Allāh], of casting suspicion and doubt on Allāh (Exalted is He) in respect of His promise. In the fulfillment of its secondary task, it promotes the commission of various acts of sinful disobedience and the postponement of repentance, as well as anything that is conducive to the destruction of the soul in this world and the hereafter.

Both of these two notions are blameworthy and to be condemned as evil. They are characteristic of the general mass of the believers *['umūm al-mu'minīn]*.

- The notion of the spirit *[khāṭir ar-rūḥ]* and the notion of the angel *[khāṭir al-malak]* have a shared rôle and purpose, since both of them communicate the truth, encourage obedience to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), as well as promote everything that is conducive to salvation *[salāma]* in this world and the hereafter, and everything that is in conformity with true knowledge *['ilm]*.
- As for the notion of the mind/intellect *[khāṭir al-'aql]*, there are times when it gives the same instructions as the lower self and the Devil, while on other occasions it gives the same instructions as the spirit and the angel. Here we have a special wisdom *[ḥikma]* from Allāh and a skillful application of His handiwork *[itqān li-ṣan'ihi]*, with the purpose of ensuring that His servant will be dealing with matters of good and evil in the presence of a rational understanding *[bi-wujūd ma'qūl]*, and with a soundness of perception and power of discrimination *[ṣiḥḥat shuhūd wa tamyīz]*.

The consequences of his actions, in terms of reward and punishment, will thus be duly assigned to his own credit or debit, because Allāh (Exalted is He) has made the human body a setting for the application of His laws *[aḥkām]*, a site for the execution of His will *[mashī'a]* within the structures of His wisdom *[mabānī ḥikmatihi]*. He has likewise made the rational mind *['aql]* the vehicle *[maṭiyya]* of good and evil. It conveys them both into the storehouse of the human body, since this is a situation for the imposition of duties *[taklīf]* and an opportunity for the exercise of management *[taṣrīf]*, as well as a means of ascertaining the balance of profit or loss, in terms of blissful delight or painful torment.

- As for the notion of certainty *[khāṭir al-yaqīn]*, this is the spirit of faith *[rūḥ al-īmān]* and the source of true knowledge *[mawrid al-'ilm]*, for it comes from Allāh (Exalted is He) and from Him it originates *[yaṣduru]*. It is peculiar to a special few *[makhṣūṣ bi-khawāṣṣ]* among the saints of sure conviction who are champions of the truth *[min al-awliyā' al-mūqinīn aṣ-ṣiddīqīn]*, the martyrs *[shuhadā']* and the spiritual deputies *[abdāl]*.[54] It never communicates anything but truth *[ḥaqq]*, even if its communication is in a secret code and delivered by very subtle means. It cannot be deciphered except by intuitive knowledge *['ilm ladunī]* and access to esoteric sources and secret information *[akhbār al-ghuyūb wa asrār al-umūr]*.

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[54] *Abdāl* is the plural of *Badal*. In the Sixth Discourse of Revelations of the Unseen, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) gives the following explanation: "Annihilation *[fanā']* is the aim and object, the final destination of the journey of the saints. This was the direction sought by all previous saints and *Abdāl* to become extinct to their own will, and let the Will of the Almighty and Glorious Truth take its place, as a permanent transformation, lasting until death. That is why they came to be called *Abdāl* [lit. 'substitutes'] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all)."

It comes only to those who are loved *[maḥbūbīn]*, to those who are sought *[murādīn]*, to those who are specially selected *[mukhtārīn]*, to those who pass beyond their own existence because of Allāh—into Him, out of them *[fānīn bi'llāh—fīhi 'anhum]*, to those who are absent from their outer beings *[ghā'ibīn 'an ẓawāhirihim]*, to those whose outer worship *['ibāda ẓāhira]* has been transformed into the inner kind *[bāṭina]*, apart from [the observance of] the obligatory duties *[farā'iḍ]* and those customs [based on the exemplary practice of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)] that are firmly established *[sunan mu'akkida]*.

Such people are always in a state of vigilant awareness of their inner beings *[bawāṭin]*, while Allāh (Exalted is He) is taking care of the development of their outer beings *[ẓawāhir]*. As He (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said in His Splendid Book:

> My Protecting Friend is Allāh who has sent down the Book, and He befriends and protects the righteous. (7:196)[55]

He befriends them and He provides for all their needs *[tawallāhum wa kafāhum]*. He keeps their hearts occupied with the study of the secrets of the invisible realms *[asrār al-ghuyūb]*, and He enlightens them through the [Divine] manifestation *[tajallī]* in everything that is near. For He has chosen them to enjoy His conversation *[muḥādatha]*, and granted them the special favor of His intimate friendship *[uns]*, of being at ease *[sukūn]* with Him, and of calm repose *[ṭuma'nīna]* in His presence.

Every day brings them a greater store of knowledge *['ilm]*, a further growth of intuition *[ma'rifa]*, an abundance of illumination, and a closeness to the One they love and worship. All the while they are enjoying a bliss that knows no exhaustion, bounties that have no expiration, happiness that has no ultimate boundary and no termination, for when the script of destiny *[kitāb]* has come to its appointed conclusion, and there must be an end to what He has decreed for them as far as continued existence in the realm of the transitory *[dār al-fanā']* is concerned, He will then transfer them from it by way of the most excellent transition—just as the bride or bridegroom is transferred from a small room to a house—from the lower to the higher.

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[55] *inna waliyyiya'llāhu'lladhī nazzala'l-Kitāba wa Huwa yatawalla's-ṣāliḥīn.*

This means that for them this world is a Garden of Paradise, and in the hereafter there will be a refreshing comfort for their eyes— namely, the vision of His Noble Countenance—without any veil or screen, without any door, without any chamberlain *[ḥājib]*, without any door-keeper, without any obstacle and without any hindrance, without any indebtedness and without any obligation, without any detriment and without any harm, without any severance and without any exhaustion. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> Surely the righteous shall dwell amidst gardens and a river, in a sure abode, in the presence of a King All-Powerful. (54:54,55)[56]

And as He has also said (Exalted is He):

> For those who do good is the reward most fair and a surplus too. (10:26)[57]

They have done good in this world through obedience for His sake, so He has rewarded them in the hereafter with the Garden of Paradise and nobility, and He has granted them blessed favor and salvation. They have done even more for His sake through the purification of their hearts and the abandonment of work for the sake of anything apart from Him, so He has rewarded them (Glory be to Him and Exalted is He) with an extra blessing in the abode of perpetuity and grace *[dār al-baqā' wa'l-minna]*, namely, with the everlasting contemplation of His Noble Countenance, just as He has made it known in His lucid Book to those of His servants who are endowed with understanding hearts and minds.

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[56] *inna'l-muttaqīna fī jannātin wa nahar—fī maq'adi ṣidqin 'inda Malīkin Muqtadir.*

[57] *li'lladhīna aḥsanu'l-ḥusnā wa ziyāda.*

Supplementary Subsection[58]

Passages from other works by Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), in which further light is shed on the important subject of 'notions' *[khawāṭir]*.[59]

1. From the Fourth Discourse of *The Sublime Revelation [al-Fatḥ ar-Rabbānī]*, pp. 41 and 42:

If your luck *[bakht]* is good, the hand of [divine] jealousy will save you from the hand of everyone apart from the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He), and it will take you to the gate of nearness to the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He), for:

> There, protection belongs only to Allāh, the True. (18:44)

When you have achieved this completely, both this world and the hereafter will come to you as servants *[khādimatain]*, with no trouble or inconvenience. Knock on the door of the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He), and stand fast at His door, because if you stay there you will learn to distinguish the various notions *[khawāṭir]* that arise in you: The selfish notion *[khāṭir an-nafs]*; the notion prompted by passion *[khāṭir al-hawā]*; the notion arising from the heart *[khāṭir al-qalb]*; the diabolical notion *[khāṭir Iblīs]*; and the angelic notion *[khāṭir al-malak]*.

You will be told: "This notion is valid *[ḥaqq]*, and this one is false *[bāṭil]*." You will learn to recognize each one by its distinguishing characteristic. When you have reached this stage *[maqām]*, you will receive a notion from the Lord of Truth *[khāṭir mina'l-Ḥaqq]* (Almighty and Glorious is He), which will train you, stabilize you, make you stand up and make you sit down, set you in motion and bring you to rest, and tell you what you must and must not do.

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[58] Supplied for the benefit of readers who do not have ready access to other works by Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—and for the convenience of those who do.

[59] These passages are excerpted from the following works: (1) Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī. *The Sublime Revelation (Al-Fatḥ ar-Rabbānī)*. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Houston, Texas: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 1992. (2) Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī. *Utterances of Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (Malfūẓāt)*. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Houston, Texas: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 1992.

2. From the Fifty-Sixth Discourse of *The Sublime Revelation [al-Fatḥ ar-Rabbānī]*, p. 386:

The believer *[mu'min]* has all his notions *[khawāṭir]* and aspirations *[himam]* united as one. He has nothing left except a notion *[khāṭir]* that occurs *[yakhṭuru]* to his heart from the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He), while he is waiting at the door of his nearness to his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He). Then, when his knowledge *[ma'rifa]* of Him is well established, the door is opened in front of him and he passes beyond it, to see that which he could never describe. A notion is for the heart, while an indication *[ishāra]* is secret speech *[kalām khafī]* to the innermost being *[sirr]*, when it has transcended one's lower self *[nafs]*, passions *[hawā]*, blameworthy characteristics *[akhlāq madhmūma]* and all creatures, into well-being, goodness and bliss. One is turned and moved about therein, like the Companions of the Cave *[aṣḥāb al-kahf]*, concerning whom Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> And we turned them over to the right, then over to the left. (18:18)

3. From the Sixty-First Discourse of *The Sublime Revelation [al-Fatḥ ar-Rabbānī]*, pp. 417 and 418:

It was in the schoolhouse, on the 20th of Rajab, A.H. 546, that the Shaikh (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said, after some discussion and in response to a question someone put to him about notions *[khawāṭir]*:

How to explain to you what notions are? Your notions come from the devil *[shaiṭān]*, natural impulses *[ṭab']*, the passions *[hawā]* and this world. Your interest or concern *[hamm]* is whatever is most important to you *[ahammaka]*. Your notions correspond in kind to your interest while it is active. A notion *[khāṭir]* inspired by the Lord of Truth

(Almighty and Glorious is He) comes only to the heart, free from anything apart from Him. As He has said:

> Allāh forbid that we should seize anyone except him with whom we found our property. (12:79)

If Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) and His remembrance *[dhikr]* are present with you, your heart will certainly be filled with His nearness, and the notions suggested by the devil, the passions and this world will all avoid your company. There is a kind of notion belonging to this world, and a notion belonging to the hereafter. There is a notion belonging to the angels, a notion belonging to the lower self *[nafs]*, and a notion belonging to the heart. There is also a notion belonging to the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He). It is therefore necessary for you, O truthful one *[ṣādiq]*, to get rid of all those other notions and to rely on the notion of the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He).

If you reject the notion of the lower self, the notion of the passions, the devil's notion and the notion of this world, the notion of the hereafter will come to you. Then you will receive the angel's notion, then finally the notion of the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He). This is the ultimate stage.

When your heart is sound, it will pause to ask each notion as it arises: "What kind of notion are you? From what source do you come?" So it will tell him: "I am the notion of such and such." "I am a true notion from the Truth *[khāṭir ḥaqq min al-Ḥaqq]*." "I am a loving counselor; the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He) loves you, so I love you too." "I am the ambassador *[safīr]*." "I am your portion of the spiritual state *[ḥāl]* of Prophethood *[nubuwwa]*."

O young man! You must devote your attention to real knowledge *[ma'rifa]* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), for it is the root of all that is good. If you are constant in obedience to Him, He will grant you real knowledge of Himself. This is why the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> When the servant obeys his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), He grants him real knowledge of Himself. Even if he then ceases to obey Him, He will not deprive him of it. Rather will He let it remain in his heart, so that He may bring it in evidence against him on the Day of Resurrection, when He will say to him: 'I honored you with real knowledge of Me, and I granted it to you as a privilege, so why did you not put into practice what you learned?'

4. From *Utterances [Malfūẓāt]*, p. 14:

I once entered the presence of a certain Shaikh while he was speaking about notions *[khawāṭir]*. "Do you like this business I am in?" he asked. "Yes," I replied. Then he said: "I fast all the year round *[aṣūmu'd-dahr]* and I break my fast every morning before dawn *[ufṭiru waqta kulli saḥar]*." He also remarked: "The food in this town is not good, so try to avoid it."

5. From *Utterances [Malfūẓāt]*, pp. 15 and 16:

The angel's notion *[khāṭir al-malak]* will come and make its presence felt in the heart of the believer *[mu'min]*, so he must pause beside it and ask it: "Who are you and where do you come from?" Then it will say: "I am your portion of Prophethood *[nubuwwa]* from the Truth *[Ḥaqq]*. I am the Truth. I come from the Friend *[Ḥabīb]*, I come from the Companion *[Rafīq]*." This notion will fill his inner being *[bāṭin]*, his hearing and his sight. You will see him becoming fond of solitude, emigrating from his native land. Then another command will come to him, to make him somewhat disturbed. Then yet another command will come to him, also causing disturbance, until calm eventually arrives. When calm has arrived, conversation will go on constantly. You will see him apparently lending his ear to someone at his side, as if someone is engaging him in conversation.

6. From *Utterances [Malfūẓāt]*, p. 46:

Among the companions of al-Junaid there was a man who was having doubts about the spontaneously arising notion *[khāṭir]*. Al-Junaid was made aware of this, so he asked the man: "What they are saying about you, is it true?" He said, "Yes," [so al-Junaid said:] "Let an utterance come through your heart." The man said, "Very well," and when asked what he had uttered [inwardly], he replied: "I uttered such and such." But [al-Junaid] said: "No, [that wasn't it]!" Then the man tried again, and when he reported [what he had uttered inwardly], he was again told: "No!" He then let one more utterance come to him through his heart, and reported to al-Junaid, who yet again said: "No!" So the man said: "O Shaikh, my experience is genuine, so you had better check your own!" To this al-Junaid replied: "I knew that everything you told me was true. I simply wanted to test the purity of your heart and its steadfastness."

7. From Utterances [*Malfūẓāt*], pp. 59 and 60:

Our predecessors would learn to distinguish between different kinds of notions [*khawāṭir*], before withdrawing into secluded retreats [*zawāyā*]. O you who cannot tell the difference between the notion [*khāṭir*] of the lower self [*nafs*], that of the devil [*shaiṭān*] and that of the heart [*qalb*], how can you withdraw into seclusion? The satanic notion prompts one to commit sins of disobedience and to make mistakes; it implants the root of unbelief [*kufr*], then encourages the sins of disobedience that branch out from it. As for the angelic notion [*khāṭir al-malak*], it prompts one to practice worshipful obedience and to perform righteous deeds.

Concerning the lower self *[nafs]* and the spirit *[rūḥ]* as focal points for the conflicting influences of the angel and the devil.

The lower self *[nafs]* and the spirit *[rūḥ]* are two focal points for the conflicting influences of the angel *[malak]* and the devil *[shaiṭān]*. On the one hand, the angel is inculcating pious devotion *[taqwā]* in the heart. The devil, on the other hand, is busy instilling moral depravity *[fujūr]* into the lower self. As a result, the lower self tries to persuade the heart to use the limbs and organs of the body for impious and immoral purposes.

Within the physical constitution *[binya]* there are also two target areas: the mind *['aql]* and the passionate instinct *[hawā]*. The functioning of each of these is subject to the will of a controlling influence *[mashī'a ḥākim]*, namely, that of helpful [divine] guidance *[tawfīq]* and that of seductive [satanic] temptation *[ighwā']*.

Within the heart there are two radiant lights, namely, knowledge *['ilm]* and faith *[īmān]*.

All of these elements are the instruments of the heart, its sensory faculties and its tools. The heart is right in the middle of these instruments, as if it were the king and these were his troops reporting to him for duty. Or, to take a different analogy, it is like the woman who is unveiled for the bridegroom's inspection *[al-mar'at al-majluwwa]*; with these pieces of equipment all around her she is exposed to view, so that he can see her, make a critical examination of her, and test her mettle.[60]

[60] As Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in an earlier chapter of al-Ghunya (Vol.1, p. 115): It is appropriate for the would-be husband to make an effort to catch a glimpse of the face and hands of his prospective bride, without actually being alone with her in private, before the marriage is contracted *[qabla'l-'aqd]*. [This is recommended as a precaution,] in case he should experience a change of heart and find her repugnant to him. [If this happened after the marriage contract,] it could result in his divorcing her by repudiation *[ṭalāq]* and separating from her in a short space of time. Such an outcome would be subject to stern disapproval in the sight of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> Nothing that is legally permissible is more hateful to Allāh (Exalted is He) than divorce by repudiation.

A series of invocations, by which the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) seeks refuge with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) from the Devil and from a wide range of specific evils and temptations.

I take refuge with the Lord of the Throne and the Pedestal from Satan the misguided, and evil notions, and the promptings of the lower self;	*a‘ūdhu bi-Rabbi’l-* *Arshi wa’l-Kursiyyi* *mina’sh-Shaiṭāni’l-ghawiyyi* *wa khawāṭiri’s-sū’i* *wa hawājisi’n-nafs—*
and from the temptation of every jinnī and human being;	*wa min fitnati* *kulli jinniyyin wa insiyy—*
and from ostentation, hypocrisy, vanity, arrogant pride, associating partners with Allāh, and the evil disorders that can arise within the heart;	*wa min riyā’in wa nifāqin* *wa ‘ujbin wa kibrin* *wa shirkin* *wa khilāli’s-sū’i’n-nāshi’ati* *fi’l-qalb—*
and from every lust and indulgence that may result in mortal dangers for the soul;	*wa min kulli shahwatin* *wa ladhdhatin mu’addiyatin* *ila’l-mahāliki li’n-nafs—*
and from heretical innovations, and wandering astray, and passions that inflict the Fires of Hell upon the human body;	*wa mina’l-bida‘i* *wa’ḍ-ḍalāli* *wa’l-ahwiyati’l-musalliṭa* *li’n-nirāni* *‘ala’l-jism—*
and from every word and deed and aspiration that may bar access to the unseen realms around the Heavenly Throne;	*wa min kulli qawlin wa fi‘lin* *wa himmatin taḥjubu* *mina’l-ghuyūbi’l-* *‘arshiyya—*
and from following misleading whims and selfish inclinations, and morals that are depraved.	*wa mina’ttibā‘i’l-ahwiyati’l-* *muḍillati wa’ṭ-ṭabā’i‘i’n-* *nafsiyyati wa’l-akhlāqi’r-* *radiyya.*
I take refuge with the Praise- worthy and Illustrious King	*wa a‘ūdhu bi’l-Maliki’l-* *Ḥamīdi’l-Majīdi*

from the wicked	*mina'sh-Shaiṭāni'l-*
and rebellious Satan.	*khabīthi'l-marīd.*
I take refuge with	*wa a'ūdhu*
the Ever-Loving Lord	*bi'r-Rabbi'l-Wadūdi*
from His vengeance, lest I ever	*min naqmatihi idhā*
neglect to obey Him.	*ghafaltu 'an ṭā'atih—*
He is indeed nearer to me	*idh Huwa aqrabu*
than my jugular vein.[61]	*ilayya min ḥabli'l-warīd.*
I take refuge with Allāh	*wa a'ūdhu bi'llāhi*
from His terrible onslaught	*min saṭwatihi*
when He is angry with those	*idhā ghaḍiba 'alā*
who are guilty of disobedience.	*ahli'l-ma'ṣiya.*
I take refuge with Him	*wa a'ūdhu bihi*
from His awe-inspiring aspect,	*min haibatihi*
when the shock of His impact	*'inda shiddati baṭshihi*
on the Day of Resurrection	*fī yaumi'l-qiyāmati*
is felt by the wrongdoers	*li'ṭ-ṭāghīna*
among His creatures.	*min bariyyatih.*
I take refuge with Him	*wa a'ūdhu bihi*
from the removal of the	*min kashfi'l-ghiṭā'i*
covering and the veil;	*wa's-sitr—*
and wandering perplexed	*wa't-tayhāni*
in disobedience to Him	*fī ma'ṣiyatihi*
by land and by sea;	*fi'l-barri wa'l-baḥr—*
and forgetting	*wa nisyāni'l-*
both the root and the branch;	*aṣli wa'l-far'—*
and tending to swerve	*wa'l-maili*
in the wrong direction;	*ila'z-zaigh—*
and thoughtlessness,	*wa'r-ru'ūnati*
arrogance and pride;	*wa'l-khuyalā'i wa'l-kibr—*
and forsaking obedience,	*wa tarki'ṭ-ṭā'ati*
righteous deeds and piety;	*wa'l-qurbati wa'l-birr—*
and falling short	*wa't-ta'allī*
in my duty to Him;	*'alaih—*
and committing perjury	*wa'l-aimāni'l-kādhibati*
and breaking an oath	*wa'l-ḥinthi*
without due consideration;	*dūna'l-birr—*
and coming to a bad end, being	*wa khātimati's-sū'i*
bankrupt of everything good,	*wa'l-iflāsi min kulli khairin*
and receiving bad news	*wa'l-muwāfāti 'inda ḥuḍūri'l-*
at the moment of death.	*maniyyati bi'sh-sharr.*

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[61] An allusion to the words of Allāh (Exalted is He) in the Qur'ān (50:16):

> We indeed created the human being, and We know what his lower self whispers within him, and We are nearer to him than the jugular vein.

Concerning the inner nature of the struggle with Satan *[mujāhadat ash-Shaiṭān]*.

The struggle with Satan is an inner struggle *[mujāhada bāṭina]*, for it is waged by the heart and the core of one's being, and by faith *[bi'l-qalb wa'l-janān wa'l-īmān]*. When you struggle with him, therefore, your help and support is the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]*, your mainstay is the King and Judge *[al-Malik ad-Dayyān]*, and your hope is the vision of the Face of the Majestic Benefactor *[al-Jalīl al-Mannān]*.

The holy war against the unbelievers *[jihād al-kuffār]* is the outer battle *[jihād aẓ-ẓāhir]* with the sword and the spear, in which your support is provided by the ruler and the armed forces, and in which your hope is to enter the Gardens of Paradise. If you are slain in the struggle with the unbelievers, your reward will be life everlasting in the abode of perpetuity *[khulūd fī dār al-baqā']*. But if you are killed in the course of waging war on Satan and while you are committed to opposing him, due to the expiration of your appointed term *[ajal]* and because your moment to die *[maniyya]* has arrived, your reward will be the vision of the Face of the Lord of All the Worlds *[Rabb al-'ālamīn]* at the meeting [with Him]. If you are slain by an unbeliever *[kāfir]*, you will be a martyr *[shahīd]*. But if you are killed by the Devil through following him obediently and carrying out his orders, you will be an outcast *[ṭarīd]*, banished from the nearness of the All-Compelling King *[al-Malik al-Jabbār]*.

The holy war against the unbelievers *[jihād al-kuffār]* has an end and there comes a point when it is over. But the holy war against the Devil and the lower self *[jihād ash-Shaiṭān wa'n-nafs]* is one that has no final limit and no point of termination. As Allāh (Glorious and Exalted is He) has said:

> And serve your Lord, till the Certainty comes to you. (15:99)[62]

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[62] *wa' 'bud Rabbaka ḥattā ya'tiyaka'l-yaqīn.*

behold!—he saw in front of him a hundred mountains *[ṭūr]*, with a Moses on top of every single mountain.

This story must be dismissed as objectionable, however, according to the experts on the transmission of such reports *[ahl an-naql]* and to the authoritative scholars of tradition *[aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth]*, who regard it as a spurious tradition *[ḥadīth bāṭil]*. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) actually issued a threat to those who might tell lies about him, for he said:

> If anyone tells a lie about me, with deliberate intent, then let him occupy his seat in the Fire of Hell!

Among the teachings of the Sālimiyya, we may also mention their doctrine that Allāh (Exalted is He) wills acts of obedience from His human servants, and does not will acts of sinful disobedience from them. They maintain that He (Almighty and Glorious is He) has willed the latter through them, not from them *[bihim lā minhum]*. This must be untrue, because Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> If Allāh dooms someone to sin *[man yuridi'llāhu fitnatahu]*, you will never be able to avail him against Allāh in any way at all. (5:41)[128]

[The expression "dooms someone to sin"] means: "makes him guilty of unbelief *[kaffarahu]*."

Allāh (Exalted is He) has also said:

> And if your Lord had so willed it, they would never have done so. (6:112)

And He has said (Exalted is He):

> And if Allāh had so willed it, they would not have fought one with another. (2:253)

To cite another of their teachings, they maintain that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to memorize the Qur'ān even before [he was called to] the Prophethood *[nubuwwa]*, and before Gabriel (peace be upon him) started coming to him.

Once again, the evidence to refute their falsehood is to be found in the Qur'ān itself, in this case in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> Not before this [O Muhammad] did you recite any Book, nor did you inscribe it with your right hand. (29:48)

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[128] The next sentence in this Qur'ānic verse reads:

> Such are they whose hearts Allāh does not wish to purify *[ulā'ika'lladhīna lam yuridi'llāhu an yuṭahhira qulūbahum]*.

The Second Discourse

Concerning the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

It is from Solomon, and it is "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate."

You should know that this noble verse *[āya]* occurs in *Sūrat an-Naml* [The Ant], which is a Sūra belonging to the Meccan period. Its verses adds up to a total of ninety-three. It contains a total of one thousand one hundred and forty-nine [Arabic] words and exactly four thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine letters [of the Arabic alphabet].

It concerns an episode in the life of the Prophet Solomon, the son of David (peace be upon him, upon our own Chosen Prophet *[Nabiyyuna'l-Muṣṭafā]*, and upon all the other Prophets *[anbiyā']*, the true believers *[mu'minīn]* and all the righteous servants *['ibād ṣāliḥīn]* of Allāh, and the angels brought near [to Him] *[malā'ika muqarrabīn]*).

⁂

As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us in the Qur'ān:[65]

> And We gave David and Solomon knowledge, and they said: "Praise be to Allāh, who has preferred us over many of His believing servants." (27:15)
>
> And Solomon was David's heir, and he said: "O mankind, we have been taught the language of the birds,[66] and we have been given [an abundance] of all things; this surely is evident favor." (27:16)
>
> And mustered unto Solomon were his armies of the jinn and humankind, and of the birds; and they were drawn up in good array, till, when they came to the Valley of Ants, an ant said: "Ants, enter your dwelling places, lest Solomon and his armies crush you, being unaware!" (27:17,18)

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[65] The translator has taken the liberty of inserting the following verses *[āyāt]* from *Sūrat an-Naml* (27:15–20) at this point in the text, since a familiarity with them is clearly presupposed by the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[66] *Manṭiq aṭ-Ṭair* [The Language of the Birds] is the title of a celebrated work, an allegory of the spiritual path, by the Persian author Farīd ad-Dīn 'Aṭṭār (d. ca. A.H. 627/1229 C.E.).

> But he smiled, laughing at its words, and he said: "My Lord, dispose me to be thankful for Your blessing, with which You have blessed me and my parents, and to do righteous work that shall be well-pleasing unto You; and include me, through Your mercy, in [the company of] Your righteous servants." (27:19)
>
> And he reviewed the birds; then he said: "How is it that I do not see the hoopoe? Or is he among the absentees?" (27:20)

⁂

When Solomon (peace be upon him) had moved on from the Valley of the Ants, in the course of his journey from Jerusalem *[Bait al-Maqdis]* to the Yemen, he led his people into a barren desert, where they were soon afflicted by thirst and started begging for water. In response to this need, he looked all around in search of the hoopoe *[hudhud]*, inquiring if anyone had seen him. He summoned the Captain of the Birds *[Amīr aṭ-Ṭuyūr]*, who happened to be the Numidian crane *[kurkī]*, and asked him if he knew where he was. Knowing that there was only one hoopoe in his company, the Numidian crane replied: "I have no idea where he went off to; he did not get his orders from me."[67]

Solomon (peace be upon him) had a very good reason for trying to find the hoopoe, since he wanted the bird to probe the ground with his beak, in order to let him know the depth at which water could be found, whether close to the surface or far beneath it, as measured by the fathom *[qāma]* or the parasang *[farsakh]*.[68]

The hoopoe was uniquely well equipped for this task, endowed as he was with a special expertise that none of the other birds possessed. Whenever he was required to perform this operation, he would fly up to a great height in the atmosphere, till he reached a vantage point from which to scan the earth below. Then, having spotted a plot of land containing water, he would swoop down upon it, sticking his beak into the ground in order to mark the spot for excavation.

At this point the devils *[shayāṭīn]* would waste no time in playing their part, by digging a well on that same plot of land. The water would soon come gushing forth, and they would direct it into basins, ponds and watering troughs. Flasks and water skins and other vessels could now be filled, and there would be plenty for all to drink, for beasts and human beings and jinn alike. Then they would be ready to set off on the next stage of their journey.

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[67] In the First Discourse (p. 6 above), the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) states that some traditional authorities equate the Numidian crane *[kurkī]* with the bird called *ghurnūq* or *ghurnayq*. This may have some bearing on its status as Captain of the Birds *[Amīr aṭ-Ṭuyūr]*.

[68] The *qāma* [fathom] is equal to six feet, while the *farsakh* [parasang, or league] is three miles of the Hāshimī measure.

It should therefore come as no surprise to us that Solomon (peace be upon him) reacted as he did on that occasion, when he discovered that the hoopoe was nowhere to be found. His anger over the situation amounted to a furious rage, and he blurted out:

> "I will surely chastise him with a terrible chastisement, or I will go so far as to slaughter him, or else he will have to bring me a clear legitimation." (27:21)

By saying, "I will surely chastise him with a terrible chastisement," he meant: "I will surely pluck his feathers, so that he cannot fly with the other birds for the space of one whole year!" But then, after threatening to "go so far as to slaughter him," he did offer him a loophole, by adding: "or else he will have to bring me a clear legitimation." He was saying, in effect: "or else he had better bring me a good excuse, and a clear and convincing explanation." The harshest form of punishment he ever inflicted on any of the birds, when he saw fit to chastise one of them, was to pluck its feathers until he had left it completely bald, without a single feather on its body. [As for the missing hoopoe, however,] Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

> But he did not tarry long, and he said, "I have comprehended that which you have not comprehended, and I have come from Sheba to you with a sure tiding." (27:22)

In other words, he did not stay away for an extended period of time. Then, when he did come back, the hoopoe was told: "Solomon has threatened to punish you!" So he asked: "Did he leave me any loophole?" Since the answer was "Yes," he approached [his master] until he stood before him, then he bowed down in prostration and said: "May your kingdom endure for all eternity, and may you live for ever and ever!"

He started pecking with his beak and nodding his head toward Solomon, as he said to the latter: "I have comprehended that which you have not comprehended." He was saying, in effect: "I reached a certain place and I learned certain things—a place you had not reached, and things of which you had no knowledge," meaning: "I have brought you news of a matter about which the jinn have neither informed you nor advised you, and concerning which no human being has notified you." When he went on to say: "And I have come to you from Sheba," he meant: "from the land of Sheba," and by "with a sure tiding" he meant: "with an amazing piece of information, the accuracy of which is beyond the slightest doubt."

"Well, what is this amazing piece of information you have brought me?" Solomon asked. So the hoopoe told him:

> "I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given [an abundance] of everything, and she possesses a mighty throne. (27:23)
>
> "I found her and her people prostrating themselves in worship to the sun, instead of to Allāh; Satan has made their deeds seem comely to them, and he has barred them from the way, and therefore they are not guided aright. (27:24)
>
> "So they do not prostrate themselves in worship to Allāh, who brings forth what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and who knows what you conceal and what you publish. (27:25)
>
> "Allāh, there is no god but He, the Lord of the Mighty Throne." (27:26)

When he says, "I found a woman ruling over them," he is referring to the lady called Bilqīs the Ḥimyarite, the daughter of Abū Sarh.[60]

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[60] Early in 1980, while he was working as Senior Research Fellow at the Islamic Foundation in Leicester, England, the translator was asked to provide an English version of an article published in the Arabic-language journal *The Family Today [al-Usra al-Yawm]*.

This article, by a writer called Aḥmad Muḥammad Jamāl, was entitled "Bilqīs: Ruler of Resolve." It is interesting to note that the story discussed in this Discourse by Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) may still be regarded as highly relevant and instructive to contemporary Muslim society:

"The lady of whom we are speaking was both a noble specimen of womanhood and a splendid model of social and political action, which she not only undertook, but carried to success. ..."

The article is also useful in that it provides us with some interesting background information that explains how Bilqīs came to ascend the throne as Queen of Sheba:

"She was the daughter of the King of Sheba. When her father died, her cousin mounted the throne, but he was neither good nor just; indeed, he was a wicked man, who had no respect for people, who violated everything sacred, and who abused his authority in order to assault the women of Sheba, both married women and virgins. Eventually, tempted by his own power, he got the devilish idea of presuming to approach his cousin, the daughter of the previous King, whose throne he had seized, with a suggestion offensive to pure and modest women.

"Now Bilqīs was wise and clever—the Qur'ān tells us about her keen intelligence. She therefore pretended to agree to what he wanted. She invited him to her palace at night, intending to kill him and to rid the country and its folk of his oppression and corruption. Unsuspecting, he came in disguise to Bilqīs's palace, congratulating himself on the great happiness he would experience on meeting Bilqīs. Little did he know that he was rushing to his death—'hastening to his doom.'

"Bilqīs said to the people of Sheba: 'I did what I have done because I found no man among you defending the honor of his daughter or his wife. I have killed him because he defiled my father's throne, and tried to defile the honor of my father's daughter. It is now up to you to choose yourselves a good king to govern your affairs.'

"But the people of the Yemen declined to have anyone rule over them except Bilqīs, who had done what the men were incapable of doing, and had rid the land and its folk of the tyranny, corruption and disaster of the former King. Thus Bilqīs became Queen of the Yemen, promising to govern its people with justice and by consultation."

By saying, "and she has been given [an abundance] of everything," he means: "She has been gifted with everything in her country of the Yemen and its neighboring territories, including knowledge, political authority, material wealth, military forces, and horses of all breeds and varieties."

In mentioning that "she possesses a mighty throne," the hoopoe is describing her splendid elevated couch *[sarīr]*. This throne of hers was in fact raised heavenwards to a height of thirty cubits, or of eighty cubits according to some accounts, and in width it measured eighty cubits. It was richly adorned with all kinds of jewels, gems and pearls.

The hoopoe "found her and her people prostrating themselves in worship to the sun, instead of to Allāh," which means that they must have been practicing the religion of the Magians[70] *[dīn al-Majūs]*. Then he reported that "Satan has made their deeds seem comely to them," which is a way of saying that he caused them to see their evil deeds in a favorable light, and that "he has barred them from the way." In other words, Satan had been keeping Bilqīs and her soldiers from the path of Islām [submission to the Will of Allāh] and right guidance.

As a result, the hoopoe continues, "they are not guided aright," since they do not recognize Islām, and so, of course, "they do not prostrate themselves in worship to Allāh, who brings forth what is hidden (i.e., the unseen *[ghaib]* and the secret *[sirr]*) in the heavens and the earth, and who knows what you conceal and what you publish (with your tongues)." [At this point, the hoopoe concludes his report to Solomon with the affirmation:] "Allāh, there is no god but He, the Lord of the Mighty Throne."[71]

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[70] Otherwise known as the Zoroastrians.

[71] At this point in the Arabic text, the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) finds it necessary to add a note of explanation, hardly translatable into English, in order to emphasize the correctness of an interpretation based on the grammatical assumption that, in this instance, the noun qualified by the adjective *al-'Aẓīm* [the Mighty] is *'Arsh* [Throne], rather than *Rabb* [Lord]. Without this explanation, the phrase *Rabbu'l-'Arshi'l-'Aẓīm* might be taken to mean "The Mighty Lord of the Throne," rather than "The Lord of the Mighty Throne."

(The possibility of confusion arises because the adjective *[a]l-'Aẓīm* occurs here in a pausal position in the Qur'ānic text, and its final vowel is therefore omitted. In a non-pausal situation, the form *[a]l-'Aẓīmi*, with final vowel *-i*, would indicate grammatical agreement with *[a]l-'Arshi*, whereas the form *[a]l-'Aẓīmu*, with final vowel *-u*, would indicate grammatical agreement with *Rabbu*.)

On seven things a person should never be without.

It is recommended that no one, whether he be on a journey or at home, should ever let himself run short of seven things, in addition to dutiful devotion *[taqwā]* to Allāh (Exalted is He) and confident trust *[thiqa]* in Him, namely the following:

1. The means to keep himself clean *[tanẓīf]* and to improve his appearance *[tazyīn]*;
2. A jar of kohl *[mukḥula]*;
3. A comb *[mushṭ]*;
4. A toothbrush *[siwāk]*;[13]
5. A pair of scissors *[miqaṣṣ]*;
6. A scratcher *[midra']*, meaning a piece of wood that is rounded at the point, shorter than a span, which the Arabs and the Ṣūfīs like to carry in order to rid themselves of nuisances, such as lice and other pests. They use it to scratch their bodies, and so they can kill insects without having to touch anything directly with their hands.
7. A flask of oil *[qārūrat ad-duhn]*.

This recommendation is based on the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), according to whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was never without this [set of seven things], whether at home or on a journey.

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[13] The *siwāk* is a small stick, softened at the tip by chewing or beating to form a kind of toothbrush.

throne would be mounted on four pillars of gold, then she would take her seat upon it, in a position from which she could see the people without their being able to see her.

If any man wished to apply to her for help with some problem or matter of business, he could present her with his request. In order to do so, he had to stand there in her presence, showing respect for her by keeping his head bowed low and not looking in her direction, then by prostrating himself without raising his head, until she gave him permission to speak. When she had dealt with their concerns and delivered her instructions, she would withdraw into her palace, and they would not see her again until the same day of the following week.

Her authority was a mighty authority indeed, so when the hoopoe arrived with the letter, he found that all the gates and doors had been locked to ensure her privacy, while the guards were on duty all around the castle, patrolling the entire perimeter. In the face of these formidable obstacles, he nevertheless kept searching for some way of getting through to Queen Bilqīs, until he finally succeeded—through a skylight in the roof of the palace.

Once he had discovered this opening, he went from one royal suite to the next, until he finally came to the far end of seven suites, where her throne towered thirty cubits high. It was there that he saw her, lying sound asleep upon her throne. She was wearing nothing at all, except for a piece of cloth to cover her most private part [*'aura*], this being her usual habit whenever she lay down to sleep. He therefore placed the letter beside her on the elevated couch, then flew up and perched in a skylight, expecting that she would soon wake up from her slumber and read the letter.

As it turned out, however, he stayed there waiting for a very long time, while she was still not showing any sign of waking up. The moment came when he could tolerate no further delay, so he swooped down and pecked her. She came to her senses immediately, and the first thing she caught sight of was the letter, lying right there beside her on the couch. She picked it up, rubbed her eyes, and started to examine the condition of the letter. How could such a letter have reached her anyway, she wondered, what with the doors all locked....

She went outside to check, and finding that the guards were still on

patrol around the palace, she inquired of them: "Did you notice anybody opening a door and entering my private apartment?"

"No," they assured her, "the doors have all remained as firmly locked as ever they were, and we have been constantly on guard around the outside of the palace."

It was at this point that Bilqīs finally opened the letter and read it, she being a lady who knew how to read and write.[71] She noticed at once that it contained the words: "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*." Then, when she had read it through, she sent for her people and they assembled in response to her summons.

> She said: "O Council, see, a noble letter has been delivered unto me." (27:29)

She described the letter as "noble" because it was properly composed and stamped with the personal seal of the sender.

> "It is from Solomon, and it is: 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate. Do not exalt yourselves against me, but come to me as those who surrender.'" (27:30, 31)

[As explained above] the expression "those who surrender *[muslimīn]*" means "those who are ready to make peace *[muṣāliḥīn]*."

> She said: "O Council, give me your formal opinion concerning my affair; I am not used to deciding an affair until you are present to bear me witness." (27:32)

In other words: "Let me know what I ought to do about this affair of mine, for I am not used to taking action until you are present to be informed and ready to participate in the process of consultation."

> They said: "We are lords of might and lords of great prowess, but the affair rests with you; so consider what you will command." (27:33)

They were saying, in effect: "We possess invincible force *[mana'a]*. No enemy has ever achieved supremacy over us, whether in active combat, in defensive capacity, or in sheer numbers, and we have never conceded the rôle of leadership to anyone else." And yet, according her the respect she deserved, they insisted: "But you know best when it comes to your own affair, so give us your command and we shall follow it."

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[71] A rare accomplishment, no doubt, in the distant age of Bilqīs herself, and the comment would seem to suggest that female literacy was also far from common in the time of Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

She then made a knowledgeable statement and announced her decision:

> She said: "Kings, when they enter a township, despoil it and cause the dignified people among its inhabitants to be humiliated. This is just what they too will do. But I am going to send them a present, and then see what the envoys bring back." (27:34, 35)

When kings went to war, they could indeed be expected to bring ruin and devastation to the cities they conquered, and to reduce their honorable dignitaries to a state of abysmal degradation. They could be expected to seize their possessions, kill their fighting men, and abuse their offspring. Bilqīs had therefore decided to send a present to Solomon, in order to see what her envoys would bring back to her, and what they would report to her about him.

As one part of her present to Solomon, Bilqīs sent him twelve young servants who were actually males, but who were rather effeminate in their appearance. Their hands were dyed with henna, and she had them comb their hair and dress in the kind of clothing normally worn by young women. She came forward to interview them, and gave them their instructions. If they were questioned in the presence of Solomon, or if he should actually speak to them himself, they were to use an effeminate manner of speaking when giving their replies.

As another part of her present, she also sent him twelve young servants who were actually females, in spite of their rough and tough appearance, which was due to the fact that she had all the hair plucked from their heads, and made them wear masculine-style pants and shoes. To them she said: "If Solomon happens to speak to you, you must respond by giving him an honest answer."

Bilqīs sent Solomon many other gifts along with these, including aloes-wood *[ʿūd yalanjūj]*,[74] musk *[misk]*,[75] ambergris *[ʿanbar]*,[76] and silk

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[74] The word *yalanjūj* is the Persian term for aloes-wood. The Arabic word *ʿūd* may sometimes mean the same (according to the Arabic lexicographers: "a well-known odoriferous substance," or "a certain aromatized wood, with which one fumigates oneself"), but it may also have the more general meaning: "wood, timber, any slender piece of wood or timber," and in some contexts it refers specifically to the musical instrument called the lute (the English term being derived from the Arabic *al-ʿūd*.) See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *ʿ–W–D*.

[75] The Arabic word *misk* may be derived from the Persian *mushk*. According to *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, the English term "musk" has the following derivation: "ME *muske*, fr. MF *musc*, fr. LL *muscus*, fr. Gk *moschos*, fr. Pers. *mushk*, fr. Skt *muṣka* testicle, fr. dim. of *mūs* mouse; akin to OE *mūs* mouse."

[76] The English word "amber" is derived from the Arabic *ʿanbar*.

[ḥarīr], which were carried by the maidservants in covered trays. She sent twelve Bactrian camels *[bukhtiyya]*,[77] valuable for the quantity of milk they could yield. She also sent him a pair of *kharaz* [gem stones of the kind that are often pierced and strung to make a necklace], one of which had been pierced with a crooked drill hole, while the other was left unpierced, and she sent him an empty goblet.

Bilqīs sent a woman emissary to accompany this collection of gifts. She instructed her to commit to memory every single detail that might be important in relation to Solomon, as well as everything he said, so that she could bring back a full report of it all to her mistress.

To all those who were being sent on the mission, she said: "Once you have come into the presence of Solomon, you must maintain an upright posture. Do not sit down until he commands you to do so. If he happens to be a cruel tyrant *[jabbār]*, he will not command you to be seated. Should this be the case, I am going to placate him with material wealth, so that he will leave us in peace. If he is actually a tolerant person, learned and wise, then of course he will command you to be seated."

Then, turning to the woman emissary, she instructed her to tell Solomon that he must cause a thread to be inserted into the pierced gem stone, but without employing the skill of any human being or member of the jinn. She instructed her to tell him that he must drill a hole through the other precious stone, but without using an iron tool, and without employing the skill of any human being or member of the jinn. He must also be able to tell the difference between the male and the female servants. She went on to instruct her to tell him that he must fill the goblet with an overflowing quantity of thirst-quenching water, which must be drawn neither from the earth nor from the sky.

Bilqīs also wrote Solomon a letter, in which she asked him questions concerning one thousand chapters of knowledge. Then her envoys set out on the road with her collection of presents. When their journey had finally brought them all the way to Solomon, and they had laid the gifts before him, they remained standing on their feet and were careful not to sit down.

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[77] According to the Arabic lexicographers, the *bukhtiyya*, a member of the species of camels for which *bukht* is the collective term, is "the Khurāsānī or Bactrian camel, begot between an Arabian she-camel and a *falij* [a large two-humped camel brought from Sind for the purpose of covering]." See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *B–KH–T*.

Concerning the inner nature of the struggle with Satan *[mujāhadat ash-Shaiṭān]*.

The struggle with Satan is an inner struggle *[mujāhada bāṭina]*, for it is waged by the heart and the core of one's being, and by faith *[bi'l-qalb wa'l-janān wa'l-īmān]*. When you struggle with him, therefore, your help and support is the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]*, your mainstay is the King and Judge *[al-Malik ad-Dayyān]*, and your hope is the vision of the Face of the Majestic Benefactor *[al-Jalīl al-Mannān]*.

The holy war against the unbelievers *[jihād al-kuffār]* is the outer battle *[jihād az-zāhir]* with the sword and the spear, in which your support is provided by the ruler and the armed forces, and in which your hope is to enter the Gardens of Paradise. If you are slain in the struggle with the unbelievers, your reward will be life everlasting in the abode of perpetuity *[khulūd fī dār al-baqā']*. But if you are killed in the course of waging war on Satan and while you are committed to opposing him, due to the expiration of your appointed term *[ajal]* and because your moment to die *[maniyya]* has arrived, your reward will be the vision of the Face of the Lord of All the Worlds *[Rabb al-'ālamīn]* at the meeting [with Him]. If you are slain by an unbeliever *[kāfir]*, you will be a martyr *[shahīd]*. But if you are killed by the Devil through following him obediently and carrying out his orders, you will be an outcast *[ṭarīd]*, banished from the nearness of the All-Compelling King *[al-Malik al-Jabbār]*.

The holy war against the unbelievers *[jihād al-kuffār]* has an end and there comes a point when it is over. But the holy war against the Devil and the lower self *[jihād ash-Shaiṭān wa'n-nafs]* is one that has no final limit and no point of termination. As Allāh (Glorious and Exalted is He) has said:

> And serve your Lord, till the Certainty comes to you. (15:99)[62]

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[62] *wa' 'bud Rabbaka ḥattā ya'tiyaka'l-yaqīn.*

to tie a piece of thread to the worm's head, and she poked herself into the gem stone, wriggling through the crooked drill hole until she came out on the other side. As he had promised, Solomon rewarded the worm by granting her a plentiful supply of fresh clover, her favorite food.

Then, having put the second gem stone on display, Solomon asked: "Who is prepared to help me out by drilling a hole through this gem stone here, without using an iron tool?"

Up spoke another worm who happened to be present, this one being a woodworm or termite *[arḍa]*. "O king," said she, "I am ready to do what you need to have done in this case, on condition that you will grant me a plentiful supply of my favorite food, which is dry timber."

"That you may have," said Solomon, whereupon the termite hopped on top of the gem stone and drilled a hole right through to the other side of it. As he had promised, Solomon rewarded the creature by granting her a plentiful supply of her favorite food, dry timber.

Next, having set the goblet in front of him, Solomon ordered a roundup of the purebred Arabian horses *[khail 'irāb]*. Once they had been rounded up, these animals were made to gallop around and around until they were getting weary and close to exhaustion, and their sweat was flowing profusely. At this point Solomon filled the goblet with the horses' sweat, which constituted "an overflowing quantity of thirst-quenching water, drawn neither from the earth nor from the sky."

Solomon then gave the command for some ordinary water to be made available, and as soon as it had been set before him, he said to the servants: "Now let me see how you go about washing your hands *[tawaḍḍa'ū]*!"[78]

His purpose in making this demand was to distinguish the menservants from the maidservants. What would happen in the case of those who were actually young women, when they set about pouring water onto the palms of their hands, was that each of them would start by taking some water in the palm of her left hand, from which she would

[78] In a strictly Islāmic context, the verb *tawaḍḍa'a* (from which the plural imperative form *tawaḍḍa'ū* is derived) would usually mean "to perform the minor ablution *[wuḍū']* for, or preparatory to, the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*." As noted by the Arabic lexicographers, however, this verb is by no means always used in this precisely technical sense. It can also convey the more general meaning: "to make oneself fair, beautiful, neat, or clean," and it sometimes signifies: "to wash one or more of the members of the body, to purify one's hand or hands, and one's mouth, by washing to remove the unpleasant odor of fat or greasy food." (The Islāmic ablutions are discussed at length in Vol. 1 of *al-Ghunya*, pp. 8–10 and 338–50.)

let it trickle over her left forearm, then her next move would be to wet her right hand and wash it clean. By following this procedure, she was therefore announcing the fact that she was a female.

Solomon was thus able to check them out one by one, until he had accounted for twelve young women, identified as female servants. In the case of those who were actually young men, on the other hand, each manservant would start by taking some water in the palm of his right hand, using that same water to wash his right forearm, then he would repeat the process with his left hand. Solomon could thereby identify him as a male, and so he checked them out one by one, until he had accounted for all twelve of the young men.

Now that these tricky problems had been dealt with satisfactorily, Solomon could turn his attention to the list of scientific questions posed by Bilqīs in her letter, so he composed his own list of a thousand answers, and placed it in the hands of her messenger. Then he sent her entire collection of presents back home to Bilqīs.

> He said: "What, would you bolster me with material wealth? But what Allāh has given me is better than what He has given you. Oh no, it is you [and not I] who exult in your gift!" (27:36)

He was addressing these words to her emissary, stating in no uncertain terms that "what Allāh has given me," i.e., Prophethood *[nubuwwa]* and kingship, "is better than what He has given you," i.e., material wealth. In this context, the expression "it is you who exult in your gift" means "it is you who think your gift is so wonderful."

Then he wrote Bilqīs a letter, handed it to the hoopoe, and said:

> "Return to them; we shall assuredly come against them with hosts they have not the power to resist, and we shall drive them out from there, abased and utterly humbled." (27:37)

That is to say: "We shall attack them with troops they are powerless to resist, and expel them from the town of Sheba...."

Once again the hoopoe flew off to the land of Sheba, where Bilqīs immediately read the letter he brought her from Solomon. As soon as her messengers had also returned, they recounted to her in detail the whole story of their experience with Solomon. They described how he had dealt with each of those challenging riddles she had sent to him, and they reported what he had sent back to her by way of a response.

Bilqīs then said to her people: "This whole affair has descended upon us from heaven above. It would not make sense to treat it as none of our business, and it is simply not within our power to dismiss it."

Next, she turned her attention to ensuring the safe storage of her throne, arranging for it to be installed in the farthest of seven apartments in her palace, and instructing the sentries to stand guard over it during her absence. Then, after taking these precautionary measures, Bilqīs set out on her journey to visit Solomon.

At this point the hoopoe flew back to Solomon, in order to give him the news that Bilqīs was already on her way to meet him. Solomon promptly assembled the experts of his kingdom, then:

> He said: "O Council, which one of you will bring me her throne, before they come to me as those who surrender?" (27:38)

Her "throne" *[ʿarsh]* refers to her elevated couch *[sarīr]*, while the expression "as those who surrender" *[muslimīn]* means "as those who are ready to make peace" *[muṣāliḥīn]*. Solomon was therefore saying in effect: "Because it will no longer be lawful for us to seize it once the peace treaty *[ṣulḥ]* has been concluded."

> An *ʿifrīt*[79] from among the jinn said: "I will bring it to you, before you can rise from your place; I have the strength for it and I am an agent worthy of trust." (27:39)

This particular *ʿifrīt* was called ʿUmarrad, an appropriate name for a member of the jinn who was so energetic and tough.[80] When he said,"before you can rise from your place," he meant: "from your seat in the court of justice," which would be in session until midday. When he said, "I have the strength for it," he meant that he was strong enough to carry the throne of Bilqīs, and in claiming to be "an agent worthy of trust," he was maintaining that he could be trusted with the extremely valuable items embedded in it: the pearls, the jewels, the chrysolite or peridot *[zabarjad]*,[81] and all that gold and silver.

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[79] The term *ʿifrīt* may be applied in general to anything that exceeds the ordinary bounds. When applied to a jinnī, or metaphorically to a human being, *ʿifrīt* means "one who is sharp, vigorous, and effective in an affair, exceeding the ordinary bounds therein with craftiness or cunning and wickedness or malignity." Some say that it is properly applied to "an evil jinnī that is powerful, but inferior to the type called *marid*." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *ʿ–F–R–T*)

[80] The adjective *ʿumarrad* is often applied to a horse that is "evil in disposition, very perverse, and strong." It may also be used to describe a wolf as "malignant and very cunning." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *ʿ–M–R–D*.)

The strength of this *'ifrīt* is said to have been such that he could plant his foot wherever his glance could reach, in other words, at the farthest point within his range of vision. He was therefore telling Solomon: "In a single stride, I can plant my foot at the most distant point my eyes can see, so it will not take me long to fetch you the throne of Bilqīs." But Solomon said: "I want it brought here even more quickly than that!"

> Said he who possessed a [special item of] knowledge from the Book: "I will bring it to you, even before your glance returns to you." (27:40)

This means that the person concerned had knowledge of the Mightiest Name[82] of Allāh *[Ismu'llāhi'l-A'ẓam]*, which is: "O Ever-Living One *[yā Ḥayy]*, O Eternally Self-Sustaining One *[yā Qayyūm]*!"[83] He was therefore saying by implication: "I shall offer a prayer of supplication to my Lord, then I shall focus my attention, look into the Book of my Lord, and bring you the throne of Bilqīs."

According to one traditional account, this person was Āṣaf ibn Barakhiyyā ibn Sha'iyyā', and his mother's name was Bāṭūrā. He was one of the Children of Israel *[banī Isrā'īl]*, and he had come to know the Mightiest Name of Allāh.

When he said to Solomon: "I will bring it to you, even before your glance returns to you," he meant: "before your glance—your eyesight, that is—has time to register an impression of the thing it is reaching out to see."

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[81] The principal Arabic-English dictionaries give chrysolite as the meaning of *zabarjad*. According to *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, the chrysolite or olivine is "a usually greenish mineral, that is a complex silicate of magnesium and iron, used esp. in refractories," while the peridot is "a deep yellowish green transparent olivine used as a gem."

[82] It is likely to strike the English-speaking reader as rather strange, that the Mightiest Name is said here to be not one Name but two, and that each of the two is preceded by the vocative particle: "O" in English, corresponding to the Arabic *yā*. We should therefore explain that the Arabic word *ism*, for which "name" is in most instances a perfectly satisfactory translation, can sometimes mean "the act of calling by a name." The term "appellation" conveyed this latter meaning in archaic English usage, but in the modern language it almost always means "an identifying name or title." In any case, the translation "Mightiest Appellation of Allāh" would hardly commend itself on esthetic grounds.

For the sake of consistency, and to avoid inflicting cumbersome circumlocutions on the poor reader, the translator has decided to stick to the rendering "Mightiest Name" in all contexts, trusting that this note of explanation will suffice.

[83] At the beginning of the third Sūra of the Qur'ān, the Book of Allāh, we read:

> *Alif–Lām–Mīm*. Allāh! There is no god but He, the Ever-Living, the Eternally Self-Sustaining *[Allāhu lā ilāha illā Huwa'l-Ḥayyu'l-Qayyūm]*. (3:1,2)

Solomon then told him: "I shall triumph if you can do what you say you can do for me, but if you cannot do it, I shall be the object of scorn among the jinn, regardless of the fact that I am the overlord [*sayyid*] of human beings and jinn alike."

Āṣaf proceeded to make himself ready by performing an act of ablution [*tawaḍḍa'a*],[84] then he bowed down in prostration [*sajada*] to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), invoking Allāh by His Mightiest Name, as he cried: "O Ever-Living One [*yā Ḥayy*], O Eternally Self-Sustaining One [*yā Qayyūm*]!"[85]

No sooner had Āṣaf uttered this invocation than the throne of Bilqīs disappeared beneath the surface of the earth, where it remained out of sight until it reemerged next to Solomon's chair of state.[86] When they noticed that the throne had emerged from the ground, the jinn said to Solomon: "Āṣaf is obviously capable of fetching the elevated couch [*sarīr*], but he may not be equal to the task of fetching Bilqīs herself." Āṣaf responded to this by telling Solomon: "Oh yes, I am going to bring Bilqīs here as well!"

Solomon now gave orders to his builders, who complied by constructing an elegant pavilion [*ṣarḥ*] for him, using building materials made entirely of pieces of glass. As soon as this edifice had been erected, he arranged to have water flowing underneath it, and to have the water stocked with fish. The glass structure was so transparent that the fish in the pond were clearly visible from the very top of the lofty pavilion. Then Solomon ordered his servants to move his chair of state, which was now to be placed in the center of the newly built pavilion. He also commanded a special set of chairs to be installed for the use of his companions, and then, once all the chairs had been set in place, he seated himself upon his own chair while his companions occupied those assigned to them.

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[84] See note [78] on p. 58 above. Although we can hardly know for certain, it seems fair to assume that the ablution Āṣaf performed on this occasion was at least very similar to the *wuḍū'* [minor ritual ablution] as it has been practiced by Muslims since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in accordance with the prescriptions of Islāmic law.

[85] **Author's note:** According to another traditional account, however, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

> "[The Mightiest Name of Allāh] is the Name to which, whenever it is used in a prayer of supplication addressed to Him, He always responds, and in answer to which, whenever it is used in asking Him for something, He always gives. And this [Mightiest Name of Allāh] is: "O Lord of Majesty and Honor [*yā Dha'l-Jalāli wa'l-Ikrām*]."

[86] **Author's note:** According to some traditional authorities, it actually surfaced beneath a stool on which Solomon used to rest his feet, when he was seated upon his great chair of state [*kursī kabīr*].

As for the order of precedence among the holders of the chairs, those sitting nearest to Solomon (peace be upon him) were the human beings, followed by the jinn and then by the devils *[shayāṭīn]*. This was the regular procedure he adopted (peace be upon him) for all purposes, so that, whenever he wished to travel about the country, he would sit upon his chair of state and they would sit on their chairs, then he would command the wind to transport them between the sky above and the earth below. If a moment came when he wished to travel on the ground, he had only to give the command for the wind to stop blowing, then he could alight and travel on the surface of the earth.

Solomon (peace be upon him) had a council of ministers *[majlis]*, his practice in this respect being no different from that of kings in our own day and age. It was only when his council had reconvened, therefore, that he summoned Āsaf to present himself once again.

Āsaf duly returned, bowed down in prostration, and invoked Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) by His Mightiest Name:
"O Ever-Living One *[yā Ḥayy]*, O Eternally Self-Sustaining One *[yā Qayyūm]* !" At that very moment, lo and behold, he had Bilqīs firmly seated right there beside him![87]

> Then, when he saw it settled in his presence, he [Solomon] said: "This is from the bounty of my Lord that He may try me, whether I am thankful or ungrateful. Whenever someone gives thanks, he is giving thanks only for the good of his own soul, and whoever is ungrateful—my Lord is surely Self-Sufficing, All-Generous." (27:40)

In other words, Solomon was saying: "that He may put me to the test of experience, to see whether I am thankful for the royal status that has been conferred upon me, or ungrateful for all the blessings I have received, since I have now seen that someone, though inferior to me in rank, may nevertheless be superior to me in knowledge." He was thus stating his determination to be thankful to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), while acknowledging that his Lord would not be in a hurry to punish someone who proved to be ungrateful for His blessings.

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[87] **Author's note:** It is maintained by some traditional authorities that the person referred to in the Qur'ān (27:40) as "he who possessed a [special item of] knowledge from the Book" was not Āsaf but a man called Ṣukha ibn Add, the officer in charge of Solomon's horses. Yet others insist that al-Khiḍr* (peace be upon him) is actually the one "who possessed a [special item of] knowledge from the Book."

***Translator's note:** The alternative spelling *al-Khaḍir* means "the Green Man." By either name, he is a popular figure, who plays a prominent part in Islāmic legends. According to some, he became green through diving into the spring of life. There is no agreement among the traditional authorities as to whether or not he should be counted as a Prophet *[Nabī]*. Some say that he lived in the time of Abraham (peace be upon him), some in the time of Noah (peace be upon him).

His name does not actually appear in the Qur'ān, but nearly all the commentators agree that the mysterious person referred to in Q.18:59–81 is indeed al-Khiḍr. He is represented in those verses *[āyāt]* as the companion of Moses (peace be upon him). It is usually believed that he is still alive in the flesh and still to be seen in sacred places, such as Mecca and Jerusalem, and some maintain that he flies through the air and meets Elias (peace be upon him) at the dam of Alexandria and makes the pilgrimage with him every year. (See: T.P. Hughes, *Dictionary of Islām*, pp. 272–73, and A.J. Wensinck's article AL-KHAḌIR in *SEI*.)

When the jinn heard of this, they started making disparaging remarks about Bilqīs in the presence of Solomon, with the intention of getting him to dislike her. They were afraid that he might decide to marry her, and that she would then be in a position to inform him about their private affairs. She was in fact quite knowledgeable in this area, since her own mother was a jinniyya, known by the name of 'Umaira, the daughter of 'Amr.[88]

It was this that prompted the jinn to say: "May Allāh prevent the king from making a serious mistake! There is something wrong with her mind, and her legs are like the shanks of a donkey." Bilqīs was in fact decidedly hirsute *[halbā']*, or hairy *[sha'rā']*, to use a more common word.

When Solomon heard them say these things about her, he conceived a plan that would enable him to examine her mental capacity, and which would also let him see her legs for himself. In order to put this plan into effect, he had some water channeled into a pond, then caused the pond to be stocked with frogs and fish. He also gave orders for certain alterations to be made to the throne of Bilqīs, by adding some new features to it and subtracting some of the existing elements from it, so that he could examine her mental faculty of recognition. As Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

> [Solomon] said: "Disguise her throne for her, so that we may see whether she will be guided aright, or if she is one of those that are not rightly guided." (27:41)

In other words, he was saying: "Make her elevated couch *[sarīr]* look different to her, so we may see whether she can still recognize it, or if she is one of those who cannot recognize the truth."

Bilqīs then approached until she eventually reached the pavilion, at which point:

> It was said to her: "Enter the pavilion." (27:44)

We understand this pavilion *[ṣarḥ]* to have been a palatial building *[qaṣr]*, but there are some who maintain that *ṣarḥ* is the word for an ordinary house *[bait]* in the dialect of Ḥimyar.

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[88] **Author's note:** Some say that her name was Rawwāha, and that she was the daughter of as-Sakan, the king of the jinn.

> But when she saw it, she supposed it was a fathomless pool. (27:44)

Since she reckoned that the pool of water was very deep indeed, Bilqīs said to herself: "He must be intending to drown me. What I shall have to do now may be unfortunate, but isn't it surely a lot better than that?"

> And she bared her legs. (27:44)

Lo and behold, two hairy legs were thus exposed to view. She was nevertheless a very fine person indeed, and as far removed as could possibly be from what Solomon had been told about her.

> [Solomon] said: "It is a pavilion, made smooth." (27:44)

In other words: "It is a sleekly constructed palace, the surface of which is perfectly smooth and bristle-free, so that it may be compared to a beardless youth *[amrad]* who has yet to grow any hair on his face. It appears that each building block has been seamlessly fixed to its neighbor, since all the blocks consist of crystal glass."

When Bilqīs moved over toward Solomon, he noticed that her legs had been exposed, and then he also noticed that the hair on her legs had been neatly trimmed. He was very pleasantly surprised by the sight he saw!

> So, when she came, it was said: "Is your throne like this?" (27:42)

That is to say, when she came to Solomon she was asked: "Is your throne like this?" So she looked at it, then began to react with acknowledgment and disavowal simultaneously. But then she said to herself: "How can this elevated couch have come to be here with me now, if it is indeed the one I left behind in the innermost of seven apartments, with my palace guards on duty all around it?" She would therefore neither acknowledge nor disown it directly.

> She said: "It seems as though it were the very same." And [Solomon said]: "We were given the knowledge before her, and we had already surrendered [to Allāh]." (27:42)

In other words: "We were given the knowledge before Bilqīs, for she was still a Magian *[Majūsiyya]* when we had already surrendered [to Allāh]." But now:

> She said: "My Lord, indeed I have wronged myself, and I surrender along with Solomon to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds." (27:44)

When a person yawns, he should cover his mouth with his hand or with his sleeve. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> If one of you happens to yawn, let him take control of his mouth, for the devil *[shaiṭān]* uses yawning as an opportunity to get inside.

According to Abū Huraira (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Allāh (Exalted is He) does like sneezing *[ʿuṭās]*, but He dislikes yawning *[tathā'ub]*, so if one of you feels a yawn coming on, let him suppress it to the best of his ability. He should not say: 'Hah, hah!', for that comes from the devil laughing at him.

It is permissible for a man to offer a sympathetic prayer *[tashmīt]* for a woman who is too old to be shy, but it is improper in the case of a bashful young girl. Where a boy is concerned, sympathy for him should be offered by using one of the following expressions:

May you be blessed!	*būrika fīk*.
May Allāh (Exalted is He) reward you!	*jazāka'llāhu (taʿālā)*.
May Allāh (Exalted is He) prefer you!	*khayyaraka'llāhu (taʿālā)*.

* * *

to tie a piece of thread to the worm's head, and she poked herself into the gem stone, wriggling through the crooked drill hole until she came out on the other side. As he had promised, Solomon rewarded the worm by granting her a plentiful supply of fresh clover, her favorite food.

Then, having put the second gem stone on display, Solomon asked: "Who is prepared to help me out by drilling a hole through this gem stone here, without using an iron tool?"

Up spoke another worm who happened to be present, this one being a woodworm or termite *[arḍa]*. "O king," said she, "I am ready to do what you need to have done in this case, on condition that you will grant me a plentiful supply of my favorite food, which is dry timber."

"That you may have," said Solomon, whereupon the termite hopped on top of the gem stone and drilled a hole right through to the other side of it. As he had promised, Solomon rewarded the creature by granting her a plentiful supply of her favorite food, dry timber.

Next, having set the goblet in front of him, Solomon ordered a roundup of the purebred Arabian horses *[khail 'irāb]*. Once they had been rounded up, these animals were made to gallop around and around until they were getting weary and close to exhaustion, and their sweat was flowing profusely. At this point Solomon filled the goblet with the horses' sweat, which constituted "an overflowing quantity of thirst-quenching water, drawn neither from the earth nor from the sky."

Solomon then gave the command for some ordinary water to be made available, and as soon as it had been set before him, he said to the servants: "Now let me see how you go about washing your hands *[tawaḍḍa'ū]*!"[78]

His purpose in making this demand was to distinguish the menservants from the maidservants. What would happen in the case of those who were actually young women, when they set about pouring water onto the palms of their hands, was that each of them would start by taking some water in the palm of her left hand, from which she would

whom was himself the commander of a further hundred thousand, whereas the total strength of Solomon's army consisted of four hundred thousand soldiers, two hundred thousand being members of the human race, while the other two hundred thousand were drawn from the ranks of the jinn. The disparity between the two armies was clearly enormous, yet the king with his smaller army was enabled to be victorious, on account of his worshipful obedience, while the queen with her vastly larger army was vanquished, on account of her unbelief *[kufr]* and her sinful disobedience.

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[78] In a strictly Islāmic context, the verb *tawaḍḍa'a* (from which the plural imperative form *tawaḍḍa'ū* is derived) would usually mean "to perform the minor ablution *[wuḍū']* for, or preparatory to, the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*." As noted by the Arabic lexicographers, however, this verb is by no means always used in this precisely technical sense. It can also convey the more general meaning: "to make oneself fair, beautiful, neat, or clean," and it sometimes signifies: "to wash one or more of the members of the body, to purify one's hand or hands, and one's mouth, by washing to remove the unpleasant odor of fat or greasy food." (The Islāmic ablutions are discussed at length in Vol. 1 of *al-Ghunya*, pp. 8–10 and 338–50.)

You must therefore acknowledge the fact, O human being, that Islām will surely prevail, and that it will not be overcome.

> And Allāh will not grant the unbelievers any way [by which to triumph] over the believers. (4:141)

Likewise in your case, O you who have access to the help and guidance of Allāh, as long as you truly believe *[āmanta]*, you will be safe *[aminta]*, not only from your enemies in this world, but also from Allāh's blazing fire in the world of the hereafter. The Fire of Hell will put itself at your service. It will bow its head silently before you, and it will show you the way [to pass through in safety], treating you with honor and respect in obedience to the commandment of its Master *[Mawlā]* and in compliance with His instructions. It will actually say to you: "Pass on through, O believer, since your light has extinguished my flame!"[93]

If you have earned the right to be addressed with such courtesy and politeness by the Fire of Hell, it must mean that you are a truly dignified and enlightened person. Since you are clad in the robe of honor conferred by the King, and since you bear the distinctive mark of the kind of dignity that always commands respect, it is incumbent upon all the royal attendants and slaves to treat you with the utmost reverence and solemnity, and to put themselves at your service.

As for the unbeliever *[kāfir]* and the rebellious sinner, the Fire of Hell will fly into a furious rage against them. It will wreak vengeance on them with all the vindictiveness of a cruel tyrant, when he takes his revenge on the enemy he has just defeated in battle.

[93] Although he does not mention the attribution here, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well-pleased with him) has told us elsewhere, notably in the Thirteenth Discourse of *Revelations of the Unseen [Futuh al-Ghaib]*, that this saying can be found in "traditions reliably ascribed to the best of humankind, the best of those ever carried by the earth and sheltered by the sky, Muhammad the Chosen (Allāh bless him and give him peace)."

As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

> When it sees them from a far-off place, they shall hear what a raging and a roaring it can make. (25:12)

It follows therefore, that if you wish for glory *['izza]* in this world and the hereafter, you must practice worshipful obedience to Allāh, and you must be very careful to refrain from sinful disobedience to Allāh, for then, through the mercy of Allāh (Exalted is He), you may find the glory you seek. As Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us in His own words:

> Whoever may wish for glory, the glory belongs entirely to Allāh. (35:10)

He has also said (Exalted is He):

> Yet glory belongs to Allāh, and to His Messenger and the believers, but the hypocrites do not know it. (63:8)

This means that your hypocrisy *[nifāq]*, O you who claim to have true faith *[īmān]*, and your associating partners with Allāh *[shirk]*, O you who lay claim to sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*, are the obstacles that have prevented you from seeing the glory of the All-Compelling One *[al-Jabbār]*, of His chosen Prophet *[nabiyyihi'l-mukhtār]*, and of the most excellent believers *[al-mu'minīna'l-akhyār]*.

If only you would conduct yourself in accordance with the demands of true faith *[īmān]*, and if only you could feel the genuine conviction that is needed in order to fulfill the prerequisites of sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*, you would enjoy in this world a guarantee of safety from every influence that causes harm, and from every devil *[shaiṭān]* among both humankind and the species of the jinn. You would also enjoy a guarantee of safety in the hereafter from the torment of the Fires of Hell. The divine help that brings victory *[nuṣra]* would be yours, while your enemies would suffer the shame of defeat. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

> If you help Allāh, He will help you, and He will make your foothold firm. (47:7)

He has also said (Exalted is He):

> So do not falter and cry out for peace, when you are the ones who will prevail, and Allāh is with you, and He will not grudge you [the reward you have earned by] your deeds. (47:35)

In your case, unfortunately, the effects of heedless negligence have piled up to form a thick coating that covers your heart. Layers of rust have accumulated all over it, and darkness and gloom have gathered around it. Serious indeed will be the consequences, in terms of sorrow and remorse:

> On the day when the innermost beings shall be put to the test. (86:9)

That is to say, on the Day of the Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, the Day of the Stark Reality *[al-Ḥāqqa]*,[94] the Day of the Great Catastrophe *[aṭ-Ṭāmmat al-Kubrā]*,[95] the Day of the Sudden Disaster *[al-Qāri'a]*,[96] the Day of the Deafening Cry *[aṣ-Ṣākhkha]*.[97]

> On that day you will be exposed; not a secret of yours will be concealed. (69:18)
>
> Upon that day mankind will issue forth in scattered groups to be shown their works, and anyone who has ever done an atom's weight of good will see it then, and anyone who has ever done an atom's weight of evil will see it then. (99:6–8)

According to some authorities on the subject, the term *dharra* ["atom" in the English translation of the Qur'ānic quotation immediately above] is properly applied to one of those tiny particles of dust that appear like pinheads in the rays of the sun. Others maintain that four *dharrāt* are equal to the weight of a mustard seed. Still others insist that *dharra* signifies the small red ant, which is almost invisible when it crawls about. The *dharra* is also said to be one thousandth part of a single pearl of barley. 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "When you spread the palm of your hand and place it on the dusty ground, then raise it back up, every particle of dust that sticks to it can be referred to as a *dharra*."[98]

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[94] The Arabic word *ḥāqqa* is derived from the same triliteral root—*ḥ–q–q*—as *ḥaqīqa* [reality, actual fact] and *al-Ḥaqq* [the (Divine) Truth]. Where *al-Ḥāqqa* occurs in the Qur'ān (69:1,2,3, also in the traditional title of that Sūra), the commentators understand it to mean the Resurrection, "because in it shall be manifest the true natures of things or actions," or "because in it things that are denied shall be surely known, namely the raising of the dead, and the reckoning, and the recompensing." (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ḥ–Q–Q*.)

[95] The expression occurs in Qur'ān 79:34.

[96] The term *al-Qāri'a* occurs in each of the first three verses *[āyāt]* of the 101st Sūra of the Qur'ān (traditionally entitled *Sūrat al-Qāri'a*), where it is understood by the commentators to mean the Resurrection. It also occurs in the above-mentioned *Sūrat al-Ḥāqqa*.

[97] Also interpreted as "the Deafening Blast [of the Trumpet]." See Q. 80:33.

[98] After perusing this passage, the reader will understand that the appropriate English equivalent of the Arabic word *dharra* (of which *dharr* is the collective form and *dharrāt* the plural) will usually be "atom" or "tiny particle" or "mote" or "speck"—although the context may call for the rendering "tiny ant" or "grub."

Well then, the important question is: Where do you stand in relation to the day when deeds will be weighed in the balance, and when some will prove to be heavy enough, but some will prove to be too light? That is the day of which Allāh (Exalted is He) is speaking when He says:

> On the day when We shall gather the righteous unto the All-Merciful, a goodly company, and We shall drive the guilty culprits into Hell, a weary herd.[99] (19:85,86)

At this point the veil will be drawn aside, and the face that was hidden behind the veil will be revealed. The true believer *[mu'min]* will be clearly distinguishable from the unbeliever *[kāfir]*, the champion of truth *[ṣiddīq]* from the hypocrite *[munāfiq]*, the one who affirms the Divine Unity *[muwaḥḥid]* from the one who associates partners with Allāh *[mushrik]*, the friend *[waliyy]* from the foe *['aduww]*, and the one who is really telling the truth *[muḥiqq]* from the one who is merely pretending *[mudda'ī]*.

You must therefore be on your guard, O miserable wretch, against the terror of that day. You must take a good look, and see which of the two parties you belong to. If you are working for the sake of Allāh, the Almighty *[al-'Aẓīm]*, if you are dedicated in all your work to performing your duty to the One who is All-Aware *[al-Khabīr]*, and if you keep your work free from any impurity that would offend the All-Seeing Examiner *[an-Nāqid al-Baṣīr]*, then you belong to the party *[ḥizb]* of the righteous *[muttaqīn]*, as a member of the goodly company that will be gathered unto the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]* on the Day of Resurrection.

If such be the case, then you deserve respect, O honorable one! And you deserve congratulations and glad tidings, O wise one! But if this description does not fit, you must realize that you are attached to the other party, and therefore doomed along with all those who are doomed to perish in the Fire of Hell, following in the footsteps of Pharaoh and Hāmān and Qārūn. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

> So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work, and let him give no one any share at all in the worship due unto his Lord. (18:110)

You have thus been given notice that nothing will come to your rescue on that Day, apart from righteous work.

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[99] **Author's note:** That is to say, a thirsty herd.

Concerning the special merit of "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*."

From a traditional report that has been transmitted on the authority of 'Aṭā', we learn that Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said:

"When the expression 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*' was first sent down [by divine revelation to mankind], the clouds fled away to the East, the winds died down, the waves of the ocean heaved in a tempestuous storm, the beasts pricked up their ears to listen, the devils *[shayāṭīn]* were pelted with stones *[rujimat]*[100] to drive them from the sky, and Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) swore by His Almighty Glory that His Name would never be uttered over an illness without His healing that illness, that His Name would never be pronounced over anything without His blessing it, and that anyone who ever recited 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*' would surely enter the Garden of Paradise."

We have it on the authority of Abū Wā'il that it was 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

"If anyone wishes to have Allāh rescue him from the clutches of the nineteen *zabāniya* [tormenting angels within the Fire of Hell], he has only to say: 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*,' for these words are spelled with nineteen letters [of the Arabic script],[101] and Allāh

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[100] The Arabic verb *rujimat* is formed from the three root letters *r-j-m*, from which the adjective *rajīm* [accursed], the passive participle *marjūm* [cursed] and the nouns *rijām* [gravestones] and *rujūm* [missiles] are also derived. The connections are fully explained in the preceding Discourse (see pp. 10–13 above).

[101] Namely, the Arabic letters: *bā', sīn, mīm, alif, lām, lām, hā', alif, lām, rā', ḥā', mīm, nūn, alif, lām, rā', ḥā', yā', mīm*. (As used in the text of this translation, the romanized transliteration of Arabic words and phrases is designed to represent the pronunciation, rather than the Arabic spelling.)

(Exalted is He) will respond to each letter in turn by substituting a Garden of Paradise for one of the *zabāniya*."[102]

According to another traditional account, this one transmitted by Ṭāwūs on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*," and he replied:

> It is one of the Names *[Ism min Asmā']* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and the closeness between it and the Mightiest Name[103] of Allāh is just like the closeness that exists between the iris and the white of the eye.

It is on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that this next saying is attributed to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If someone picks up from the ground a piece of paper with "*Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm*" upon it, because he regards Allāh as far too Exalted to have His Name trampled underfoot, that person will be recorded in His presence as one of the champions of truth *[ṣiddīqīn]*, and his parents will be granted an alleviation [of their punishment], even if they are guilty of associating partners with Allāh *[mushrikūn]*.

It has been said that Iblīs[104] the Damned was never heard to utter a plaintive cry, except on three occasions. The first time he uttered a plaintive cry was when he was damned and expelled from the Kingdom of Heaven. He emitted another such cry when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was born, and he uttered his third lament

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[102] In a verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān (96:18), Allāh (Exalted is He) declares: "We shall summon the *zabāniya*." Since the triliteral Arabic root *z-b-n* conveys the idea of "shoving" or "thrusting", the commentators have understood the term to mean "certain angels, so called because they are charged with the task of thrusting the damned into the Fire of Hell."

In the Fifth Discourse of *The Removal of Cares [Jalā' al-Khawāṭir]* Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) tells us that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has created tormenting angels *[zabāniya]* within the Fire of Hell. They serve Allāh by inflicting vengeance on His enemies, the unbelievers. So, when He wishes to chastise an unbeliever *[kāfir]*, He says to them: "Seize him!" Seventy thousand of them immediately rush toward that unbeliever, and as soon as he falls into the hands of one of them, he melts like fat in the fire, so that nothing is left on his body but the dripping *[wadak]*. Then Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) restores his normal constitution to him, whereupon they proceed to bind him with shackles and chains of fire, tying his head and his feet together. Then they hurl him into the Fire of Hell.

[103] For more on the Mightiest Name *[al-Ism al-A'ẓam]*, see p. 61 above.

[104] See note 33 above.

when the Opening Sūra of the Qur'ān *[Fātiḥatu'l-Kitāb]* was revealed, because it began with the words:
"In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*."

According to a report transmitted on the authority of Sālim ibn al-Ja'd, it was 'Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said that, soon after "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*" had been revealed, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had this to say about it:

> When this *āya* [verse of Scripture] was first sent down to Adam, he said: "My offspring will be safe from punishment, as long as they continue to recite it!" Then it was taken away, until it was sent down again to Abraham, the Special Friend of Allāh *[Ibrāhīm al-Khalīl]*, who recited it while he was held in the sling of the catapult, whereupon Allāh made the fire [of the furnace into which he was about to be hurled] become coolness and peace for his sake.[105]
>
> Then it was taken away after Abraham's time, not to be sent down again until it was revealed to Solomon, whereupon the angels exclaimed: "Now, by Allāh, your dominion is finally complete!" Then it was taken away once again, but Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has now sent it down to me.
>
> Eventually, when they come to the Day of Resurrection, the members of my Community will be saying: "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*," and so, when their deeds are placed in the balance, their good deeds will outweigh [their bad deeds].

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has left us with this instruction concerning *Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm*:

> Write it in your books, and, when you set it down in writing, pronounce it aloud!

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[105] An allusion to Qur'ān 21:69.

Further discussion concerning the special merit of "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*."

'Ikrima (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"The very first objects to be created by Allāh were the Tablet *[Lauh]* and the Pen *[Qalam]*. Allāh then commanded the Pen to move across the Tablet, setting down upon it the record of all that was to be until the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*. The very first inscription to be written upon the Tablet was: 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Rahmāni'r-Rahīm]*.'

"Then Allāh decreed that this *āya* [verse of Scripture] would serve as an assurance of protection *[amān]* for His creatures, as long as they made a regular practice of reciting it. The recitation of it thus became the regular practice of the inhabitants of the Seven Heavens, the inhabitants of the Highest Plane, the inhabitants of the Canopies of Glory *[Surādiqāt al-Majd]*, and the Archangels *[Karūbiyyūn]*,[106] as well as of all pure beings and those who constantly proclaim the absolute glory of the Lord *[musabbiḥūn]*.[107]

"The first time 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Rahmāni'r-Rahīm]*' was revealed to mankind was when it was sent down to Adam (peace be upon him), and when he received it he said: 'My offspring will be safe from punishment, as long as they continue to recite it!'

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[106] The Archangels *[Karūbiyyūn]* (called Cherubim in the Hebrew Bible) are said to be the chiefs or princes of the angels, included among whom are Gabriel *[Jabrā'īl or Jibrīl]*, Michael *[Mīkā'īl]* and Isrāfīl. They are sometimes referred to as *al-Muqarrabūn* [those brought near], because they are the nearest of the angels to the Bearers of the Divine Throne *[Ḥamalat al-'Arsh]*. (See: E.W. Lane, ***Arabic-English Lexicon***, *art. K–R–B.*)

[107] During the Islāmic ritual prayer *[salāt]*, the glorification of the Lord *[tasbīḥ]* is uttered each time the worshipper adopts the postures of bowing *[rukū']* and prostration *[sujūd]*. While adopting the bowing posture, one says: "*Subḥāna Rabbiya'l-'Aẓīm* [Glory to my Lord, the Almighty!]" and when in prostration: "*Subḥāna Rabbiya'l-A'lā* [Glory to my Lord, the Most High!]"

Solomon then told him: "I shall triumph if you can do what you say you can do for me, but if you cannot do it, I shall be the object of scorn among the jinn, regardless of the fact that I am the overlord *[sayyid]* of human beings and jinn alike."

Āṣaf proceeded to make himself ready by performing an act of ablution *[tawaḍḍa'a]*,[84] then he bowed down in prostration *[sajada]* to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), invoking Allāh by His Mightiest Name, as he cried: "O Ever-Living One *[yā Ḥayy]*, O Eternally Self-Sustaining One *[yā Qayyūm]* !"[85]

No sooner had Āṣaf uttered this invocation than the throne of Bilqīs disappeared beneath the surface of the earth, where it remained out of sight until it reemerged next to Solomon's chair of state.[86] When they noticed that the throne had emerged from the ground, the jinn said to Solomon: "Āṣaf is obviously capable of fetching the elevated couch *[sarīr]*, but he may not be equal to the task of fetching Bilqīs herself." Āṣaf responded to this by telling Solomon: "Oh yes, I am going to bring Bilqīs here as well!"

Solomon now gave orders to his builders, who complied by constructing an elegant pavilion *[ṣarḥ]* for him, using building materials made entirely of pieces of glass. As soon as this edifice had been erected, he arranged to have water flowing underneath it, and to have the water stocked with fish. The glass structure was so transparent that the fish in the pond were clearly visible from the very top of the lofty pavilion. Then Solomon ordered his servants to move his chair of state, which was now to be placed in the center of the newly built pavilion. He also commanded a special set of chairs to be installed for the use of his companions, and then, once all the chairs had been set in place, he seated himself upon his own chair while his companions occupied those assigned to them.

[84] See note [78] on p. 58 above. Although we can hardly know for certain, it seems fair to assume that the ablution Āṣaf performed on this occasion was at least very similar to the *wuḍū'* [minor ritual ablution] as it has been practiced by Muslims since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in accordance with the prescriptions of Islāmic law.

[85] **Author's note:** According to another traditional account, however, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

> "[The Mightiest Name of Allāh] is the Name to which, whenever it is used in a prayer of supplication addressed to Him, He always responds, and in answer to which, whenever it is used in asking Him for something, He always gives. And this [Mightiest Name of Allāh] is: "O Lord of Majesty and Honor *[yā Dha'l-Jalāli wa'l-Ikrām]*."

[86] **Author's note:** According to some traditional authorities, it actually surfaced beneath a stool on which Solomon used to rest his feet, when he was seated upon his great chair of state *[kursī kabīr]*.

before all the rabbis *[aḥbār]*, devotees *[ʿibād]* and ascetics *[zuhhād]* from all the tribes were assembled in his presence.

"Solomon then arose and mounted the pulpit *[minbar]* of the Special Friend of Allāh *[al-Khalīl]*, and so it was from the pulpit of Abraham that he recited to them the verse of Scripture that guarantees protection *[āyatu'l-amān]*: 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*.' No one heard these words without being filled with joy. They all said: 'We now bear witness that you are indeed the Messenger of Allāh, really and truly *[ḥaqqan]*!'

"It thus enabled Solomon to vanquish the kings of the earth, and it was to be the means by which Allāh would effect the conquest *[iftataḥa]*[111] of Mecca for the sake of His Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

"After the time of Solomon, however, it was again taken away from mankind, until it was sent down to the Messiah *[Masīḥ]*, Jesus the son of Mary (peace be upon him), who received it with great joy, and whose Disciples *[Ḥawāriyyūn]*[112] welcomed the glad tidings it represented. Allāh (Exalted is He) conveyed to him by way of inspiration: 'O son of the Virgin *[ʿAdhrāʾ]*, do you realize what kind of *āya* it is that I have just revealed to you? It is actually the verse of Scripture that guarantees protection *[āyatu'l-amān]*, that is to say, My words: "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*." You must therefore recite it very frequently, in your standing and your sitting and your lying down, in your coming and your going, in your climbing uphill and in your climbing down.'

"[Allāh (Exalted is He) continued:] 'If anyone shows up on the Day of Resurrection with "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*" inscribed eighty times in his record book, and if he is one who truly believes *[mu'min]* in Me and in My Lordship *[Rubūbiyyati]*, I will grant him immunity from the Fire of Hell and I will cause him to enter the Garden of Paradise. It must therefore be pronounced as the preface to your recitation of the Scriptures, and as the introduction to your performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, for if anyone should die in the course of a recitation or prayer begun with these words, [the pair of angels called] Munkar and Nakīr will not subject him to their usual post-mortem interrogation, the agonies of death *[sakarāt al-mawt]* and the crushing pressure of the grave will be alleviated in his case, and My mercy *[raḥma]* will be upon him. I shall allow him to have plenty of space inside his grave. I shall give him plenty of light within his grave. I shall let him have light therein to the full extent of his faculty of sight.

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[111] The verb *iftataḥa* is derived from the triliteral root *f–t–ḥ*, which conveys the basic idea of "openness." For a full account of many important ramifications of this Arabic root, see the Translator's Introduction to *The Sublime Revelation [al-Fatḥ ar-Rabbānī]*, another volume in the Al-Baz series of English translations of the works of Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[112] Several authorities assign to the singular form *ḥawārī* the meaning: 'A person who whitens clothes by washing and beating them,' and then explain that its plural form is applied to the disciples of Jesus (peace be upon him) because their trade was to do this. Others trace the application to meanings like: 'One who is freed and cleared from every vice, fault or defect.' (For yet other explanations, see E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ḥ–W–R*.)

"'When I bring him forth from his grave [on the Day of Resurrection], it will be with his body perfectly clean and his face most radiant, shining with a brilliant glow. When I call him to account, I shall make it an easy reckoning for him to pass, and I shall tip the scale of the balance in his favor. I shall provide him with perfect illumination on the Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]*, so that he can cross over safely and enter the Garden of Paradise. I shall also command the herald to announce him, when he is ushered onto the Fields of the Resurrection *['Araṣāt al-Qiyāma]*, as one who is worthy of bliss and forgiveness.'

"Jesus (peace be upon him) then responded with the question: 'O Allāh! O my Lord! Can this be specially for me?' So the Lord told him: 'For you in particular, as well as for those who follow you, who conduct themselves in keeping with your example, and who speak as you speak. It is also for Aḥmad and his Community *[Umma]*, after you.'

"Jesus (peace be upon him) conveyed this news to his followers, to whom he said:

> I am also bringing good tidings of a Messenger who shall come after me, whose name shall be Aḥmad [Praiseworthy]. (61:6)[113]

"When he had explained to them that the name Aḥmad [Praiseworthy] would be in keeping with the excellence of his nature, his character, his refinement, and so on and so forth, Jesus (peace be upon him) accepted from his followers their solemn covenant to believe in this coming Messenger. Later, when Allāh (Exalted is He) raised him up to heaven, he reemphasized the importance of this covenant to his companions. In the course of time, however, when all the Disciples and all the other

followers who had known him during his lifetime had passed away, along came the more recent generations, who began to go astray and to lead other people astray. They pursued their worldly interests instead of the interests of their religion *[dīn]*, and they encouraged other people to do the same. As this tendency continued, the verse of Scripture that guarantees protection *[āyat al-amān]* was withdrawn from the breasts of the Christians *[Naṣāra]*, although it did remain intact within the breasts of those People of the Gospel who had truly submitted to Allāh *[muslimī ahl al-Injīl]*, such as the monk *[rāhib]* Baḥīrā[114] and others like him.

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[113] *wa mubashshiran bi-Rasūlin ya'tī min ba'di'smuhu Aḥmad.*

"The time came at last when Allāh sent forth the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to carry out his mission, and so '*Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm*' was once again sent down, for it was revealed to him in Mecca as part of the Sūra of Praise *[Sūrat al-Ḥamd]*.[115] In accordance with the instructions which were then issued by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), this was to be inscribed at the head of the various Chapters[116] in which the text of the Qur'ān was compiled, as well as on the front pages of official dispatches *[rasā'il]* and registers *[dafātir]*.

"The fact that this *āya* had been sent down to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was indeed a mighty triumph *[fatḥ]*.[117] The Lord of Almighty Glory *[Rabb al-'Izza]* swore by His Almighty Glory that no truly convinced believer *[mu'min mūqin]* would ever preface an undertaking with this invocation of His Name, without His granting that person His blessing for the success of the undertaking concerned, and that no believer would ever recite it without the Garden of Paradise saying to Him: 'I wait intent upon Your service, time and time again, and upon aiding Your cause, time and time again

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[114] According to traditional accounts, Baḥīrā was a Nestorian monk whose dwelling in Syria lay along the route followed by the Meccan caravans. One of the caravans that stopped there was accompanied by the Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who was only twelve years of age at the time, and who was traveling with his uncle Abū Ṭālib on the return journey from Syria to Mecca. Baḥīrā is said to have realized, through witnessing various signs and portents, that the young traveler in his presence was indeed the Messenger foretold by Jesus (peace be upon him).

[115] This is another name for the Opening Sūra *[Sūrat al-Fātiḥa]* of the Qur'ān.

[116] *Suwar*, plural of *Sūra*.

[117] For the derivation and range of meaning of the term *fatḥ*, see note [111] above.

[labbaika wa saʿdaik].[118] O Allāh, allow this servant of Yours to enter me, on the strength of "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm].*'"

The significant point is that, when the Garden of Paradise makes such a plea on behalf of a servant [of Allāh], it is a foregone conclusion that he will be considered worthy to enter therein, for the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> No supplication *[duʿā]* will ever be rejected if it is prefaced with "*Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm* [In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate]."

He has also told us:

> When they come at last to the Day of Resurrection, the members of my Community will be saying: "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm],*" and so, when their deeds are placed in the balance, their good deeds will outweigh [their bad deeds].
>
> The other religious communities will then of course ask: "What can have caused the scales to weigh so heavily in favor of the Community of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace)?"
>
> So their Prophets *[anbiyā']* will tell them: "Whenever they had something important to say, the members of the Community of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would always begin by invoking three of the Noble Names of Allāh (Exalted is He),[119] knowing the gravity of those Names to be such that if they were placed in one scale of the balance, even if all the bad deeds of their fellow creatures in their entirety were placed in the other scale, their good deeds would certainly weigh heavier [than the bad]."

Finally, he has given us this assurance:

> Allāh (Exalted is He) has caused this *āya* to be effective as a cure for every sickness, an aid to every kind of healing treatment, a relief from every form of poverty, a shield against the Fire of Hell, and a guarantee of security from degradation *[khasf]*, misrepresentation *[maskh]* and slanderous accusation *[qadhf]*, as long as they [His believing servants] keep up the practice of reciting it.

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[118] This expression occurs in the formula pronounced, as a recommended practice, before the recitation of *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa* in the Islāmic ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*:

> *Labbaika wa saʿdaika wa'l-khairu baina yadaika wa'sh-sharru laisa ilaik* [I wait intent upon Your service, time and time again, and upon aiding Your cause, time and time again, and all that is good is in Your presence, while evil cannot be imputed to You].

[119] The whole expression "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*" is sometimes referred to as a Name *[Ism]*. In this instance, however, the reference is to the three Noble Names contained within it, viz., (1) Allāh, (2) the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]* and (3) the All-Compassionate *[ar-Raḥīm]*.

Some interpretative commentary *[tafsīr]* on His words: "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*."

On the subject of His words (Exalted is He): "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*," the following story has come down to us from 'Atiyya al-'Awfī, according to whom Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him)[120] reported that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Jesus (peace be upon him) was sent by his mother (may Allāh be well pleased with her) to take lessons at the elementary school *[kuttāb]*. When the teacher told him to say: "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*," Jesus (peace be upon him) said: "Do you know what *Bismi'llāh* stands for?"
>
> "I have no idea," the teacher replied, so the child went on to explain: "The letter B stands for *Bahā' Allāh* [the Beautiful Majesty of Allāh], the letter S stands for *Sanā' Allāh* [the Splendid Exaltation of Allāh], and the letter M stands for *Mamlakatuhu* [His Mighty Kingdom]."

Let us now compare the commentary of Abū Bakr al-Warrāq, who had this to say on the subject:

"'In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāhi]*,' is one of the meadows *[riyāḍ]* of the Garden of Paradise. For every letter of the Arabic alphabet with which it is spelled, there is a separate interpretation *[tafsīr]*.

"As for the letter *Bā'*, its significance is sixfold:

"First of all, it points to the fact that Allāh is the *Bāri'* [Maker] of His entire creation, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below. To cite the Qur'ānic proof *[bayān]* of this:

> He is Allāh, the Creator, the Maker [of everything from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below]. (59:24)[121]

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[120] Sa'īd Sa'd ibn Mālik ibn Sinān al-Khudrī al-Anṣārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was a Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and a famous narrator of Tradition. He died in A.H. 74 or, according to some reports, in A.H. 63–4.

[121] *Huwa'llāhu'l-Khāliqu'l-Bāri'.*

"Secondly, it points to the fact that Allāh is the *Baṣīr* [All-Seeing], meaning that He sees every detail of His entire creation, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below. Consider the Qurʾānic text:

> And Allāh is All-Seeing over what you do. (49:18)[122]

"Thirdly, it points to the fact that Allāh is the *Bāsiṭ ar-rizq* [Ample Provider] for all His creatures, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below. The evidence is in the following Qurʾānic text:

> Allāh provides the means of livelihood in ample measure for whomever He will, and He limits the measure [thereof for whomever He will]. (13:26)

"Fourthly, it points to the fact that Allāh is *Bāqin* [Everlasting] after the passing away *[fanāʾ]* of all and everything in His creation, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below. In evidence of this, let me cite the Qurʾānic text:

> All those who are upon it [upon the earth] shall pass away, yet still abides the Face of your Lord, in majesty and splendor. (55:26,27)[123]

"Fifthly, it points to the fact that Allāh is the *Bāʿith* [Resurrector] of all His creatures after death, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below, in order to apportion the reward and the punishment they have deserved. To cite the relevant Qurʾānic text:

> And because Allāh will raise up those who are in the graves. (22:7)

"Sixthly, it points to the fact that Allāh is *Bārr* [Benign] toward all true believers *[muʾminīn]*, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below. Here again, we find our evidence in the Qurʾān:

> He is the All-Benign, the All-Compassionate. (52:28)[124]

"Let us now turn our attention to the letter *Sīn*, the significance of which is fivefold:

"Firstly, it points to the fact that Allāh is the *Samīʿ* [All-Hearing], meaning that He hears all the sounds and voices of His creatures, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below. To cite the relevant text of the Qurʾān:

> Or do they reckon that We cannot hear their secret thoughts and their private confidences? (43:80)

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[122] *wa'llāhu Baṣīrun bi-mā taʿmalūn.*

[123] *kullu man ʿalaihā fān—wa yabqā wajhu Rabbika Dhu'l-Jalāli wa'l-Ikrām.*

[124] *Huwa'l-Barru'r-Raḥīm.*

"Secondly, it points to the fact that Allāh is a *Sayyid* [Sovereign Lord] whose sovereignty *[su'dad]* holds absolute sway over all, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below. To cite the Qur'ānic authority for this assertion:

> Allāh, the Everlasting Lord. (112:2)[125]

"Thirdly, it points to the fact that Allāh is *Sarī'u'l-ḥisāb* [Swift at reckoning] with all His creatures, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below. As we read in the Qur'ān:

> And Allāh is Swift at reckoning. (2:202)[126]

"Fourthly, it points to the fact that Allāh is the *Salām* [Source of Peace], who keeps His creatures safe from the dark forces of oppression, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below. This we know from the Qur'ānic text:

> The Source of Peace, the Safekeeper. (59:23)[127]

"Fifthly, it points to the fact that Allāh is the *Sātir* [Veiler] of the sins committed by His servants, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below. To quote the relevant text of the Qur'ān:

> The Forgiver of sin, the Accepter of repentance.... (40:3)[128]

"In the case of the letter *Mīm*, there are twelve distinct aspects:

"Firstly, it points to the fact that Allāh is the *Malik* [King] of His entire creation, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below. We know this from the Qur'ānic text:

> The King, the Holy One. (59:23)[129]

"Secondly, it points to the fact that Allāh is the *Mālik* [Owner of Dominion] over His entire creation, from the Heavenly Throne to the earth below. The evidence is in the Qur'ānic text:

> Say: "O Allāh, Owner of Dominion!" (3:26)[130]

[125] *Allāhu'ṣ-Ṣamad.*

[126] *wa'llāhu Sarī'u'l-ḥisāb.*

[127] *as-Salāmu 'l-Mu'min.*

[128] *Ghāfiri'dh-dhanbi wa Qābili't-taub....*

[129] *al-Maliku'l-Quddūs.*

[130] *quli'llāhumma Mālika'l-Mulk.*

His Book,[182] and since this view is confirmed by the Prophetic tradition *[sunna ma'thūra]*. It must be an attribute *[sifa]* that is intrinsic to Him *[lāzima lahu]* and properly befitting Him *[lā'iqa bihi]*, like the Hand *[yad]*, the Face *[wajh]*, the Eye *['ain]*, the Hearing *[sam']*, the Sight *[baṣar]*, the Life *[ḥayāt]* and the Power *[qudra]*, all of which are properly attributed to Him, as well as His being Creator *[Khāliq]*, Sustainer *[Rāziq]*, Giver of Life *[Muḥyin]* and Causer of Death *[Mumīt]*.

We do not depart from the Book and the Sunna. We read the Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* and the traditional report *[khabar]*. We believe what these two sources contain, and we entrust the detailed understanding *[kaifiyya]*[183] of the [divine] attributes to the knowledge *['ilm]* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). As Sufyān ibn 'Uyaina[184] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once put it: "Just as Allāh (Exalted is He) has described Himself in His Book." In other words, the reading of it is self-explanatory, and there is no need of further interpretative commentary *[tafsīr]*. This is all that is required of us, because the rest is a mystery *[ghaib]*, the comprehension of which is beyond the scope of the human mind *['aql]*.

We beg Allāh (Exalted is He) to grant pardon *['afw]* and well-being *['āfiya]*, and we take refuge with Him in case we should say anything about Him or His attributes that we have not been taught by Him or by His Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[The believer must also acknowledge and be thoroughly convinced] that He (Exalted is He) descends each night to the heaven of this lower world *[samā' ad-dunyā]*, however He wills and just as He wills, and that He then forgives those who have sinned, erred, offended and disobeyed; those of His servants, that is to say, whom He chooses and wishes to forgive. Hallowed and Exalted is the All-High, the Most High *[tabāraka wa ta'āla'l-'Aliyyu'l-A'lā]*.

> There is no god but He *[lā ilāha illā Hū]*. His are the Most Beautiful Names *[lahu'l-asmā'u'l-ḥusnā]*. (20:8)

This is not to be understood as meaning the descent of [Allāh's] mercy *[nuzūl ar-raḥma]* and His spiritual reward *[thawāb]*, as maintained by the

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[182] Qur'ān 7:54, 10:3, 13:2, 20:5, 25:59, 32:4 and 57:4.

[183] Literally, the 'how-ness.' The abstract noun *kaifiyya* is formed by the addition of the termination *-iyya* to the adverb *kaif*, which means 'how' (or, as an interrogative, 'how?')

[184] Abū Muhammad Sufyān ibn 'Uyaina ibn Maimūn al-Hilālī (d. A.H. 196 or 198). A prominent early scholar of Qur'ān and Tradition.

(Exalted is He) will respond to each letter in turn by substituting a Garden of Paradise for one of the *zabāniya*."[102]

According to another traditional account, this one transmitted by Ṭāwūs on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*," and he replied:

> It is one of the Names *[Ism min Asmā']* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and the closeness between it and the Mightiest Name[103] of Allāh is just like the closeness that exists between the iris and the white of the eye.

It is on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that this next saying is attributed to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If someone picks up from the ground a piece of paper with "*Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm*" upon it, because he regards Allāh as far too Exalted to have His Name trampled underfoot, that person will be recorded in His presence as one of the champions of truth *[ṣiddīqīn]*, and his parents will be granted an alleviation [of their punishment], even if they are guilty of associating partners with Allāh *[mushrikīn]*.

It has been said that Iblīs[104] the Damned was never heard to utter a plaintive cry, except on three occasions. The first time he uttered a plaintive cry was when he was damned and expelled from the Kingdom of Heaven. He emitted another such cry when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was born, and he uttered his third lament

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[102] In a verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān (96:18), Allāh (Exalted is He) declares: "We shall summon the *zabāniya*." Since the triliteral Arabic root *z-b-n* conveys the idea of "shoving" or "thrusting", the commentators have understood the term to mean "certain angels, so called because they are charged with the task of thrusting the damned into the Fire of Hell."

In the Fifth Discourse of *The Removal of Cares [Jalā' al-Khawāṭir]* Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) tells us that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has created tormenting angels *[zabāniya]* within the Fire of Hell. They serve Allāh by inflicting vengeance on His enemies, the unbelievers. So, when He wishes to chastise an unbeliever *[kāfir]*, He says to them: "Seize him!" Seventy thousand of them immediately rush toward that unbeliever, and as soon as he falls into the hands of one of them, he melts like fat in the fire, so that nothing is left on his body but the dripping *[wadak]*. Then Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) restores his normal constitution to him, whereupon they proceed to bind him with shackles and chains of fire, tying his head and his feet together. Then they hurl him into the Fire of Hell.

[103] For more on the Mightiest Name *[al-Ism al-Aʿẓam]*, see p. 61 above.

[104] See note [33] above.

Concerning the opinions offered by various experts in the field of Arabic lexicology to explain the linguistic origin of the Name "Allāh" and the meaning thereof.

The reader should be aware that people have held many different opinions concerning this Name. According to Khalīl ibn Ahmad,[139] whose view is shared by one group of experts in the field of Arabic lexicology *[ahl al-'arabiyya]*, it is a Name that applies only to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and absolutely no one is entitled to share it with Him.

Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> Do you know anyone who can be named as a namesake of His? (19:65)[137]

What this signifies is that every Name that applies to Allāh (Exalted is He) is applicable not only to Him but to others as well—to Him in the real sense *['ala'l-haqīqa]* and to others in a figurative or metaphorical sense *[majāz]*—with the exception of this one Name, for the Name "Allāh" belongs exclusively to Him, since it contains the meaning of Supreme Lordship *[Rubūbiyya]* and all the implications *[ma'ānī]* thereof are covered by it.

It is very interesting to see what happens when you drop the letters one by one from the Name "Allāh" as it is spelled in the Arabic script *[alif–lām–lām–hā']*: When you drop the *alif*, you are left with *lām–lām–hā'*, which is the way we spell *li'llāh* [to, or for, Allāh]. When you drop the first of the two *lām*'s, you are left with *lām–hā'*, which is the way we spell *lahu* [to, or for, Him]. Then, when you also drop the *lām* in *lahu*, you are left with the letter *hā'*, representing the syllable *hu*, which is here pronounced as *Hū [He]*.[138]

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[137] Khalīl ibn Ahmad (d. A.H. 160 or 170 or 175) is credited with the composition of the first general lexicon of the Arabic language, or at least with having begun the composition of that work, under the title *Kitāb al-'Ain* (because the first words listed in it were those beginning with the letter 'ain).

[138] When "Allāh" is grammatically in the nominative case, the vowel *-u* is added at the end. The prolonged sound *-ū* is heard in the actual pronunciation, although the vowel-sign (when supplied, as in the text of the Qur'ān) is that which normally indicates the short vowel *-u*.

As far as its lexical derivation *[ishtiqāq]* is concerned, the linguistic experts have suggested a wide range of possibilities. According to an-Naḍir ibn Shumail, the Name "Allāh" may be derived from *ta'alluh*, which is a synonym for *tanassuk* [devotion to religious exercises] and *ta'abbud* [devotion to services of worship], or from the expression *alaha ilāhatan*, which has the same meaning as *'abada 'ibādatan* [to serve, worship, adore].[139]

Others maintain that it is derived from *ilāh*, in the sense of *i'timād* [reliance upon someone for protection], for if a person is heard to say: "I sought asylum *[alihtu alahan]* with so-and-so," he will be understood to mean: "I felt myself to be in grave danger, so I took refuge with him and relied on him for protection."

To explain how this relates to Allāh, and the possible derivation of His Name, the point is that when His creatures find themselves in disastrous situations and in dire need of help, they seek refuge with Him and implore Him to give them protection. Since He does indeed grant them asylum *[ya'lahuhum]*, the term *Ilāh* is properly applied to Him, just as the person who is accepted as a leader *[yu'tammu bih]* is properly referred to as an Imām.

As for His human servants, they are *mu'allahūn* in relation to Him; that is to say, they are compelled to accept their utter dependence upon Him, whether it be to secure things that are beneficial or to avoid things that cause harm. In this respect, their condition is just like that of the lovelorn fool *[wālih]*, who is totally subject to compulsion and completely overwhelmed by a force beyond his control.

According to Abū 'Amr ibn al-'Alā', the Name "Allāh" is actually derived from the expression you might use if you found something utterly bewildering *[alihtu'sh-shai']*, in the sense that you were so perplexed by it that you could not figure out the right approach toward it. The point he is making is that our human minds become hopelessly confused when they try to grasp the very essence *[kunh]* of His divine quality *[ṣifa]* and His sublime majesty *['aẓama]*, and when they try to grasp His unique mode of being *[kaifiyya]*. If we accept this derivation, the term *Ilāh* is properly applied to Him because it is equivalent in meaning to *Ma'lūh* [One who is Held in Awe], just as *kitāb* is equivalent in meaning to *maktūb* [set down in writing; a letter, book, manuscript] and *ḥisāb* to *maḥsūb* [reckoned or counted; a reckoning or account].[140]

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[139] In this and similar cases, for the sake of clarity and simplicity, the translator has given the English infinitive ("to serve," etc.) instead of the literal equivalent ("he served a service," etc.) The structure of the Arabic language makes it convenient for traditional grammarians and lexicographers to use a verb in the third person masculine singular, followed by the corresponding verbal noun as its object, as their basic unit of reference.

According to al-Mubarrad, the Name "Allāh" is derived from an idiomatic expression, peculiar to the pure speech of the Arabs of the desert *[qaul al-'Arab]*,[141] whereby one of them would use the word *alihtu*, rather than *sakantu*, if he had reason to say: "I felt really at home with so-and-so." It would seem that when he came to propose this derivation, al-Mubarrad must have been considering the sense of comfort and peaceful repose that is felt by Allāh's creatures when they remember Him. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

> It is truly in the remembrance of Allāh that hearts feel comfortably at rest. (13:28)[142]

There are some who maintain that the Name "Allāh" is derived from *walah*, which is the Arabic term for the loss of reason that one may experience through being bereaved of someone very dear and precious. In proposing this derivation, they would seem to be suggesting that He came to be called "Allāh" because human hearts are thrown off balance *[tawlahu]* by the feeling of love for Him, and because they become unsettled and filled with yearning when they experience what it means to remember Him.

Others maintain that the meaning of "Allāh" is "the One who veils Himself *[Muḥtajib]*," because if something has once been visible to the Arabs of the desert, but has then come to be veiled from their sight, they refer to it as a *lāh* [mirage]. When the bride conceals herself behind a veil, she is sometimes said to have disappeared like a mirage *[lāhati'l-'arūs; talūhu lawhā]*. In the case of Allāh (Exalted is He), He is Manifest *[Ẓāhir]* as far as His Supreme Lordship *[Rubūbiyya]* is concerned, through signs and indications, but He is also the One who veils Himself *[Muḥtajib]* with regard to His unique mode of being, in order to deter illusory speculations.

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[140] The nouns *Ilāh*, *kitāb* and *ḥisāb* are all formed after the generic pattern called *fi'āl* by the Arab grammarians, who use the root consonants *fā'–'ain–lām* as a kind of algebraic x–y–z. Thus each of the three nouns mentioned here is formed by inserting the vowels -i- and -ā- within the framework of its particular triliteral root (*'–l–h*, *k–t–b* and *ḥ–s–b*, respectively).

By a similar process, *Ma'lūh*, *maktūb* and *maḥsūb* are all formed after the generic pattern called *maf'ūl*, which indicates a passive participle. It should be noted that a word of the pattern *fi'āl* is only exceptionally equivalent in meaning to the *maf'ūl* formed from the same root.

[141] According to the authorities cited by E.W. Lane in his *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *'–R–B*, the term *al-'Arab* is generally used as "an appellation of common application [to the whole nation]," but where it occurs in the lexicons and lexicological works, it is "applied to the desert Arabs of pure speech." Since al-Mubarrad was a celebrated lexicologist, the translator has therefore taken his expression *qaul al-'Arab* to mean "the pure speech of the Arabs of the desert," rather than simply "the speech of the Arabs."

[142] *a-lā bi-dhikri'llāhi taṭma'innu'l-qulūb*.

Yet others maintain that "Allāh" means "the Exalted One *[Muta'ālī]*." Their view is based on the assumption that it must be derived from the Arabic verb *lāha*, which can mean "to rise; to ascend." A similar derivation may account for the term *ilāha* [goddess], as it used to be applied to the sun *[shams]*.[143]

It has also been suggested that "Allāh" means "the One who is Capable of Original Creation, without instrument or preexisting model *[al-Qādir 'ala'l-ikhtirā']*," while some say that it means "the Lord and Master *[as-Sayyid]*."

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[143] Since the Arabic word *shams* is grammatically feminine, the sun was referred to by its worshippers as a goddess *[ilāha]*, rather than a god *[ilāh]*.

Various interpretations of "the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm]*."

According to one group, the meaning of both *ar-Raḥmān* and *ar-Raḥīm* is one and the same, namely, "the Owner of Mercy *[Dhu'r-Raḥma]*," and they are both included among the attributes of the Divine Essence *[ṣifāt adh-Dhāt]*.

Some authorities, however, while they agree that the two words are identical in meaning, maintain that they refer specifically to the nonimposition of punishment on those who deserve to be punished, and the conferring of goodness upon those who do not deserve it. According to those who take this view, both *ar-Raḥmān* and *ar-Raḥīm* should rather be counted among the attributes of the Divine Action *[ṣifāt al-Fi'l]*.

All the other interpreters have drawn some kind of distinction between the two terms. They generally maintain that *ar-Raḥmān* has the form of an intensive epithet, and that its meaning must therefore be "the One whose Mercy extends to cover everything," whereas *ar-Raḥīm* is not quite so all-embracing in degree.

In order to clarify this distinction, some of them explain that *ar-Raḥmān* means "the One who is Kindly Disposed *['Āṭif]* toward each and every one of His creatures—not only toward the believer *[mu'min]* amongst them but also toward the unbeliever *[kāfir]*, not only toward the righteous *[barr]* amongst them but also toward the sinful transgressor *[fājir]*, inasmuch as He has created them and provided them with their sustenance." As they point out, Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

> And My Mercy embraces all things. (7:156)

They say that what is meant by *ar-Raḥīm*, on the other hand, is that He is All-Compassionate toward the believers *[mu'minīn]* in particular, inasmuch as He blesses them with right guidance *[hidāya]* and helpful direction *[tawfīq]* in this world, and with the Garden of Paradise *[Janna]* and the Beatific Vision *[Ru'ya]* in the hereafter.

As Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

> And to the believers He is All-Compassionate. (33:43)

This whole explanation is based on the understanding that *ar-Raḥmān* is specific when considered strictly as a unit of vocabulary *[khāṣṣ al-lafẓ]*, but universal with respect to its meaning *['āmm al-ma'nā]*, whereas *ar-Raḥīm* is universal when considered simply as a unit of vocabulary *['āmm al-lafẓ]*, but specific with respect to its meaning *[khāṣṣ al-ma'nā]*.

In the case of *ar-Raḥmān*, it is specific inasmuch as it cannot be used to name anyone other than Allāh, and universal inasmuch as its meaning embraces all entities that exist *[mawjūdāt]* by virtue of His creation, sustenance, beneficence and protection.

In the case of *ar-Raḥīm*, it is universal in the sense that mere creatures are entitled to share its use as an epithet among their own kind,[144] but it is specific in terms of its meaning, since it refers to treating certain people with tender kindness *[luṭf]* and helping them to succeed *[tawfīq]*.

Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "Two subtle Names *[Ismān daqīqān]*, one of them more subtle than the other!"

It was Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "He is *ar-Raḥmān* in dealing with the people of this world, and *ar-Raḥīm* in dealing with the people of the hereafter. This is why we should appeal to Him by saying: 'O All-Merciful Lord of this world! O All-Compassionate Lord of the hereafter! *[yā Raḥmāna'd-dunyā, yā Raḥīma'l-ākhira]*.'"

The order appears to be reversed in this saying of aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "He is *ar-Raḥmān* in relation to the people of Heaven, inasmuch as He has allowed them to reside in the heavens, has made it easy for them to practice all forms of worshipful obedience, has rendered them immune to all painful misfortunes, and has kept them from being influenced by desires and temptations. And He is *ar-Raḥīm* in relation to the people of the earth, inasmuch as He has sent the Messengers *[Rusul]* to them, and has revealed to them the Books of Scripture."

[144] In other words, it is permissible to refer to a fellow human being as *ar-raḥīm*, if one has reason to describe that person as compassionate or sympathetic. (It should be noted that there is no corresponding distinction, in the Arabic script itself, to the spelling device conventionally adopted in transliteration, where the contrast between an upper-case and a lower-case initial is used to distinguish a Divine Name like *ar-Raḥīm* from the ordinary adjective *ar-raḥīm*.)

To quote the words of 'Ikrima (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "He is *ar-Raḥmān* by virtue of one single Mercy, and *ar-Raḥīm* by virtue of a hundred mercies."

According to a traditional report that has been handed down to us from Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has no fewer than a hundred mercies. One of these mercies He has already sent down to the earth, where He has distributed it among His creatures, and this is what enables them to treat one another with considerate kindness *[yata'āṭafūn]* and to feel sympathy for one another *[yatarāḥamūn]*. The other ninety-nine He has kept back for His own eventual use, His purpose being to use them for the merciful treatment of His servants on the Day of Resurrection.

In a slightly different version, part of the wording is as follows:

> Allāh (Exalted is He) will add this [one] to those [ninety-nine], so they will make a total of one hundred, and He will use them for the merciful treatment of His servants on the Day of Resurrection.

The All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]* is the One who gives when He is asked, while the All-Compassionate *[ar-Raḥīm]* is the One who gets angry when He is not asked. In a saying *[ḥadīth]* attributed to him by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> If someone never asks Allāh for anything, He becomes angry toward that person.

And in the words of the poet:

> Allāh gets vexed if you stop asking Him for things,
> whereas being asked has that effect on human beings.

He is *ar-Raḥmān* from the standpoint of blissful well-being, for blissful well-being is what the All-Merciful grants and bestows, and He is *ar-Raḥīm* from the standpoint of all forms of painful suffering, for painful suffering is what the All-Compassionate dispels and takes away.

He is *ar-Raḥmān* from the standpoint of deliverance from the Fires of Hell, the deliverance mentioned in His glorious words:

> And you were on the brink of a pit of fire, and He did save you from it. (3:103)[200]

And He is *ar-Raḥīm* from the standpoint of admission to the Gardens of Paradise, as He has said:

> Enter them [the Gardens of Paradise] in peace and security! (15:46)

He is *ar-Raḥmān* from the standpoint of His merciful treatment of our lower selves *[nufūs]*, and He is *ar-Raḥīm* from the standpoint of His compassionate way of dealing with our hearts *[qulūb]*. He is *ar-Raḥmān* from the standpoint of dispelling grief and woe *[kurūb]*, and *ar-Raḥīm* from the standpoint of forgiving sins *[dhunūb]*. He is *ar-Raḥmān* from the standpoint of clearly marking out the path *[ṭarīq]*, and He is *ar-Raḥīm* from the standpoint of providing safeguards and helpful direction *[tawfīq]*. He is *ar-Raḥmān* from the standpoint of forgiving bad deeds, even if they happen to be major offenses *['aẓīmāt]*, and He is *ar-Raḥīm* from the standpoint of accepting acts of worshipful obedience, even if they happen to be less than pure *[ghair ṣāfiyāt]*. He is *ar-Raḥmān* from the standpoint of promoting His servants' best interests in the life of this world *[ma'āsh]*, and He is *ar-Raḥīm* from the standpoint of promoting their best interests in the life of the hereafter *[ma'ād]*.

As the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]*, He is the One who always acts mercifully, and can use His power to remove all that is harmful and to drive away everything bad. As the All-Compassionate *[ar-Raḥīm]*, He provides His creatures with sustenance and supplies them with food, although He has no need of food for Himself.

> He is indeed Allāh. He is the All-Provider, the Lord of Mighty Strength, the Ever-Firm. (51:58)

He is *ar-Raḥmān* in His treatment of those who refuse to believe in Him *[jahadah]*, and He is *ar-Raḥīm* in His treatment of those who affirm His Oneness *[waḥḥadah]*. He is *ar-Raḥmān* in His treatment of those who are ungrateful toward Him *[kafarah]*, and He is *ar-Raḥīm* in His treatment of those who give thanks to Him *[shakarah]*. He is *ar-Raḥmān* in His treatment of those who say that He has a partner or peer *[nidd]*, and He is *ar-Raḥīm* in His treatment of those who say that He is Unique *[Fard]*.[145]

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[145] In the original text of this passage, we have an example of the style of Arabic composition known as *saj'* or *kalām musajja'*, which is a kind of rhymed prose. (According to the Arabic lexicographers, the term *saj'* refers, in its primary signification, to the modulated cooing of the pigeon.)

The sentences are not metrical, as they are in poetry, although they are characterized by a certain rhythm. The rhyming quality of the two words that end two corresponding clauses may be obvious, as in the case of *jahadah . . . waḥḥadah*, and then *kafarah . . . shakarah*, in the passage above. In some instances, however, the rhyming element is no more than the repetition of a final consonant, like the *-d* that enables *nidd* to "rhyme" with *Fard* in the two clauses of the last sentence in the passage here discussed.

After giving the advice: "Say: 'In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*,' for then you will find Allāh's forgiveness," the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) pauses to interject some profound questions concerning the quality of our hearing.[146]

Say: "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*," for then you will find Allāh's forgiveness.

This is the way you listen to the human reciter *[qāri']*, so how are you going to listen to the Maker *[Bāri']*? This is the nature of your hearing now, while sorrow is still prevalent *[bāq]*, so how will your hearing be in the presence of the Lord, when He is offering a refreshing drink *[sāq]*? This is the way you hear when you listen to an intermediary *[bi-wāsiṭa]*, so how are you going to hear directly from the source *[bi-lā wāsiṭa]*? This is the way you hear in this abode of delusion *[ghurūr]*, so how are you going to hear in the abode of joy and delight *[surūr]*? This is the way you hear in this abode of the Devil *[Shaiṭān]*, so how are you going to hear in the vicinity of the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]*? This is the way you listen to a lowly servant *[ʿabd dhalīl]*, so how are you going to listen to the Majestic King *[al-Malik al-Jalīl]*?

This is the thrill of learning by hearsay *[khabar]*, so how about the thrill of seeing for oneself *[naẓar]*? This is the thrill of studious endeavor *[mujāhada]*, so how about the thrill of direct witnessing *[mushāhada]*? This is the thrill of obtaining a secondhand explanation *[bayān]*, so how about the thrill of enjoying an unfiltered view *[ʿiyān]*? This is the thrill of communicating in the absence of personal contact *[mughāyaba]*, so how about the thrill of communicating face to face *[muʿāyana]*?

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[146] Apart from the opening sentence, the entire text of this subsection is composed in the rhymed and rhythmic, but nonmetrical prose called *sajʿ*. (See note [145] above.)

A series of invocations, each of them beginning with: "In the Name of Allāh, who… [*Bismi'llāhi'lladhī…*]."[147]

Say: "In the Name of Allāh, who utterly transcends any attribution of counterparts [*addād*]. In the Name of Allāh, who is absolutely exempt from any attribution of partners or peers [*andād*]. In the Name of Allāh, who is far removed in His Holiness from the begetting of children [*awlād*].

"In the Name of Allāh, who causes all lights to shine [*nawwara'l-anwār*]. In the Name of Allāh, who honors those who are righteous and fine [*abrār*]. In the Name of Allāh, who has predetermined all destinies [*aqdār*], and who has enlightened human hearts and eyes [*abṣār*]. In the Name of Allāh, who manifests Himself to the hearts of the righteous [*abrār*] in those moments just before the break of day [*ashār*].

"In the Name of Allāh, who allows dear friends to gain knowledge of the mysteries [*asrār*], for He floods them with rays of light [*anwār*] and entrusts them with the keeping of those secrets [*asrār*]. From them He banishes all dangers [*akhṭār*]. He preserves them from being enslaved by jealous rivals [*aghyār*], and He relieves them of all burdens, shackles, bonds [*āsār*] and heavy loads [*awzār*]. For indeed, He has been characterized from all eternity by the attributes of beneficence, abundant grace, and readiness to forgive the sins of those who seek forgiveness [*ahl al-istighfār*]."

Say: "In the Name of Allāh, the Name of the One who causes the flowing of the rivers [*anhār*] and the sprouting of the trees [*ashjār*]."

[Say: "In the Name of Allāh," for that is] the Name of the One who brings prosperity to countries and towns by populating them with truly obedient folk from among His servants [*'ibād*]. Such people serve as mainstays [*awtād*], as mountain-like pillars of support, so that, for those who dwell upon it, the earth comes to be as safe and as cozy as the cradle [*mihād*]. They are the Forty, the pick of the spiritual deputies [*abdāl*], the ones who never let it be forgotten that the Lord is totally exempt from any attribution of partners and peers [*andād*]. They are kings in this world, and they will be intercessors on behalf of humankind upon the Day of the Final Summoning [*Yaum at-Tanād*]. My Lord has indeed created them as a benefit to all the world, and as a gift of mercy to His servants [*'ibād*].

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[147] This subsection is also composed entirely in *saj'* (and, as readers will surely notice in due course, if they compare the transliterated Arabic words in brackets, so are all the remaining subsections in this Second Discourse).

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On some of the many precious blessings conferred by "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*."

"In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is a treasure for those who remember, a mighty resource for the strong, a protective talisman for the weak, a radiant light for lovers, and a joyful delight for those who are filled with yearning.

"In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is the consolation of our spiritual natures *[arwāḥ]*. "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is the salvation of our bodily forms *[ashbāḥ]*.

"In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is the light that illuminates our breasts *[ṣudūr]*. "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is the organizing principle that regulates our affairs *[umūr]*.

"In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is the crown of the truly confident *[tāj al-wāthiqīn]*. "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is the lamp of those who reach their destination *[sirāj al-wāṣilīn]*. "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is that which satisfies the needs of ardent lovers *[mughni'l-'āshiqīn]*.

"In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is the Name of the One who honors certain servants and humiliates certain servants *['ibād]*.

"In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is the Name of the One who keeps the Fire of Hell in store for His enemies as an ambush *[mirṣād]*, and who keeps the Beatific Vision in store for His friends as a promised rendezvous *[mī'ād]*.

"In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is the Name of the Single One without number *[Wāḥid bi-lā 'adad]*. "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is the Name of the One who endures forever without end *[al-Bāqī bi-lā amad]*. "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is the Name of the One who stands firm without supporting props *[Qā'im bi-lā 'amad]*.

"In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is the invocation that serves as an introduction *[iftitāḥ]* to every Sūra [of the Qur'ān].

It is the Name of the One who brings good cheer to those who practice solitary retreats *[khalawāt]*. It is the Name of the One who brings a sense of completeness to those who perform the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*.

It is the Name of the One who inspires us to improve our minds by thinking better thoughts *[ẓunūn]*. It is the Name of the One for whose sake we spend the night with sleepless eyes *[ʿuyūn]*. It is the Name of the One who has only to say to something, "Be!" and there it is *[yakūn]*.[148]

It is the Name of the One who is far beyond description in terms of physical touch *[misās]*. It is the Name of the One who can dispense entirely with human beings *[unās]*. It is the Name of the One who rises majestically above all comparison *[qiyās]*.

Say: "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" letter by letter *[ḥarfan harfā]*, for then you will receive the recompense in multiples of a thousand *[alfan alfā]*, and the burdens of sin will be scooped away from you by the shovelful *[jarfan jarfā]*.

If someone says it with his tongue, that person will witness all that is offered by this world *[dunyā]*. If someone says it with his heart, that person will witness all that is offered by the world hereafter *[ʿuqbā]*. And if someone says it with his innermost being, that person will actually witness the Master *[Mawlā]*.

"In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is a phrase that brings a pleasant sensation to the mouth *[fam]*. "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is a phrase with which no feeling of unhappiness *[ghamm]* can coexist.

It is a phrase that brings about the perfection of good fortune *[niʿma]*. It is a phrase that brings about the abolition of misfortune *[niqma]*. It is a phrase that accounts for the special privileges enjoyed by this [the Islamic] Community *[Umma]*.

To utter the whole phrase, "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*," is to pronounce a simultaneous invocation of Divine Majesty *[Jalāl]* and Divine Beauty *[Jamāl]*, for "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is an invocation of Divine Majesty within an expression of majesty *[Jalāl fī jalāl]*, while "the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[ar-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*" is an invocation of Divine Beauty within an expression of beauty *[Jamāl fī jamāl]*.

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[148] An allusion to the Qur'ān, where Allāh says of Himself (Exalted is He):

> To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth, all obey His will—the Creator of the heavens and the earth; and when He decrees a thing, He but says to it "Be," and it is *[kun fa-yakūn]*. (2:116,117)

On the importance of satisfying the sexual needs of one's wife.

The recommended practice is for the husband to indulge in foreplay *[mulāʿaba]* with his wife, prior to the act of sexual union, and then to remain attentive to her after he has satisfied his own need, until she has also satisfied her need. Neglecting to provide such attention is tantamout to committing an injurious offense against her, and this all too often results in loathing and separation.

◆

It is the Name of the One who brings good cheer to those who practice solitary retreats *[khalawāt]*. It is the Name of the One who brings a sense of completeness to those who perform the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*.

It is the Name of the One who inspires us to improve our minds by thinking better thoughts *[ẓunūn]*. It is the Name of the One for whose sake we spend the night with sleepless eyes *['uyūn]*. It is the Name of the One who has only to say to something, "Be!" and there it is *[yakūn]*.[148]

It is the Name of the One who is far beyond description in terms of physical touch *[musās]*. It is the Name of the One who can dispense entirely with human beings *[unās]*. It is the Name of the One who rises majestically above all comparison *[qiyās]*.

Say: "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" letter by letter *[ḥarfan harfā]*, for then you will receive the recompense in multiples of a thousand *[alfan alfā]*, and the burdens of sin will be scooped away from you by the shovelful *[jarfan jarfā]*.

If someone says it with his tongue, that person will witness all that is offered by this world *[dunyā]*. If someone says it with his heart, that person will witness all that is offered by the world hereafter *['uqbā]*. And if someone says it with his innermost being, that person will actually witness the Master *[Maulā]*.

"In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is a phrase that brings a pleasant sensation to the mouth *[fam]*. "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is a phrase with which no feeling of unhappiness *[ghamm]* can coexist.

It is a phrase that brings about the perfection of good fortune *[ni'ma]*. It is a phrase that brings about the abolition of misfortune *[niqma]*. It is a phrase that accounts for the special privileges enjoyed by this [the Islamic] Community *[Umma]*.

To utter the whole phrase, "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*," is to pronounce a simultaneous invocation of Divine Majesty *[Jalāl]* and Divine Beauty *[Jamāl]*, for "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*" is an invocation of Divine Majesty within an expression of majesty *[Jalāl fī jalāl]*, while "the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[ar-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*" is an invocation of Divine Beauty within an expression of beauty *[Jamāl fī jamāl]*.

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[148] An allusion to the Qur'ān, where Allāh says of Himself (Exalted is He):

> To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth, all obey His will—the Creator of the heavens and the earth; and when He decrees a thing, He but says to it "Be," and it is *[kun fa-yakūn]*. (2:116,117)

Some further interpretations of the Arabic letters and words that occur in: *"Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm* [In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate]."

Say: "*Bismi'llāh* [In the Name of Allāh]." According to one interpretation, the letter *bā'* stands for *Bāri' al-barāyā* [the Maker of all creatures], while the letter *sīn* stands for *Sattār al-khaṭāyā* [the Veiler of faults], and the letter *mīm* stands for *al-Mannān bi'l-'aṭāyā* [the Bestower of gifts].

There are some who maintain that the letter *bā'* stands for *Barī' min al-awlād* [the One who is Exempt from begetting children], while the letter *sīn* stands for *Samī' al-aṣwāt* [the Hearer of the voices (that appeal to Him)], and the letter *mīm* stands for *Mujīb ad-da'awāt* [the One who responds to prayers of supplication].

According to another interpretation, the significance of these three letters [in reverse order] is expressed by the following commands of the Lord: "Offer food to your fellow creatures, for I am the One who provides you with food *[Muṭ'imukum]*. Offer them water to drink, for I am the One who quenches your thirst *[Sāqīkum]*. Pay attention to Me, for I am your Eternal Lord *[Bāqīkum]*."

Still others maintain that the letter *bā'* stands for *bukā' at-tā'ibīn* [the weeping of those who repent], while the letter *sīn* stands for *sujūd al-'ābidīn* [the act of prostration made by worshippers (in their ritual prayer)], and the letter *mīm* stands for *ma'dhirat al-mudhnibīn* [the pardoning of sinners].

Turning from letter-by-letter to word-by-word interpretations, we find that some have explained the nuances of meaning as follows:

Allāh is the Remover of trials and tribulations *[Allāhu Kāshif al-balāyā]*. The All-Merciful is the Giver of gifts *[ar-Rahmānu Mu'ṭi'l-'aṭāyā]*. The All-Compassionate is the Forgiver of faults *[ar-Raḥīmu Ghāfir al-khaṭāyā]*.

"Allāh" is for those who know by intuition *[Allāhu li'l-'ārifīn]*. "The All-Merciful" is for devout worshippers *[ar-Raḥmānu li'l-'ābidīn]*.

Further discussion concerning the special merit of "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*."

‘Ikrima (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"The very first objects to be created by Allāh were the Tablet *[Lauḥ]* and the Pen *[Qalam]*. Allāh then commanded the Pen to move across the Tablet, setting down upon it the record of all that was to be until the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*. The very first inscription to be written upon the Tablet was: 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Rahmāni'r-Rahīm]*.'

"Then Allāh decreed that this *āya* [verse of Scripture] would serve as an assurance of protection *[amān]* for His creatures, as long as they made a regular practice of reciting it. The recitation of it thus became the regular practice of the inhabitants of the Seven Heavens, the inhabitants of the Highest Plane, the inhabitants of the Canopies of Glory *[Surādiqāt al-Majd]*, and the Archangels *[Karūbiyyūn]*,[106] as well as of all pure beings and those who constantly proclaim the absolute glory of the Lord *[musabbiḥūn]*.[107]

"The first time 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Rahmāni'r-Rahīm]*' was revealed to mankind was when it was sent down to Adam (peace be upon him), and when he received it he said: 'My offspring will be safe from punishment, as long as they continue to recite it!'

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[106] The Archangels *[Karūbiyyūn]* (called Cherubim in the Hebrew Bible) are said to be the chiefs or princes of the angels, included among whom are Gabriel *[Jabra'īl or Jibrīl]*, Michael *[Mīkā'īl]* and Isrāfīl. They are sometimes referred to as *al-Muqarrabūn* [those brought near], because they are the nearest of the angels to the Bearers of the Divine Throne *[Ḥamalat al-'Arsh]*. (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *K–R–B*.)

[107] During the Islāmic ritual prayer *[salāt]*, the glorification of the Lord *[tasbīḥ]* is uttered each time the worshipper adopts the postures of bowing *[rukū']* and prostration *[sujūd]*. While adopting the bowing posture, one says: "*Subḥāna Rabbiya'l-'Aẓīm* [Glory to my Lord, the Almighty!]" and when in prostration: "*Subḥāna Rabbiya'l-A'lā* [Glory to my Lord, the Most High!]"

Concerning some particular benefits obtained by those who invoke the Divine Mercy by saying: "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*."

Allāh will surely bestow His mercy upon those who refuse to follow Satan *[Shaiṭān]*, who turn away from sinful disobedience *[ʿiṣyān]*, who take good care to avoid the Fires of Hell *[nīrān]*, who make it their regular practice to perform works of charity *[iḥsān]*, and who constantly remember the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]*, for they never fail to invoke His Mercy by saying: "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*."

Allāh will surely bestow His Mercy upon those who take refuge with Allāh, who turn in repentance to Allāh, who put their absolute trust in Allāh, and who actively practice the remembrance of Allāh, for they never fail to invoke His Mercy by saying: "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*."

Allāh will surely bestow His Mercy upon those who abstain from this world *[dunyā]*, who long for the hereafter, who endure with patience when they must suffer pain *[adhā]*, who give thanks for blessed well-being *[naʿmāʾ]*, and who actively practice the remembrance of the Master *[Maulā]*, for they never fail to invoke His Mercy by saying: "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*."

Congratulations to any servant [of Allāh] who is steering well clear of the Tempter *[Ṭāghūt]*, who is expecting nothing more from this world than his basic nourishment *[qūt]*, and who is actively practicing the remembrance of the Living One who never dies *[al-Ḥayy alladhī lā yamūt]*, for that servant is surely saying right now:

"In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*."

The Third Discourse

Concerning the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And repent unto Allāh all together, O believers, for then you may be able to succeed.[149]

Here we have an exhortation to repentance *[tauba]* addressed in general terms to the community at large.

As a term in the nontechnical vocabulary of classical Arabic, the verbal noun *tauba* is actually a synonym of *rujū'* [returning; going back; coming back]. The same applies to the corresponding verbs, as in the expression: "So-and-so has returned *[tāba]* from such and such," where the meaning would be identical if we substituted *raja'a* for *tāba*.[150]

This accounts for the special significance acquired by the term *tauba* in a religious context [where it is usually translated "repentance"], because it has come to mean: "the act of returning *[rujū']* from that which is blameworthy according to the sacred law *[shar']* to that which is praiseworthy according to the sacred law, in acknowledgment of the fact that sins and acts of disobedience are causes of perdition, distancing those who commit them from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) and from His Garden of Paradise, while the abandonment of such offenses brings one near to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) and to His Garden of Paradise."

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[149] *wa tūbū ila'llāhi jamī'an ayyuha'l-mu'minūna la'allakum tufliḥūn.* (24:31)

[150] Both *tauba* and *tāba* are derived from the tri-consonantal root *t—w—b,* while the root of *rujū'* and *raja'a* is *r—j—'.* Since the Arabic letters *rā', jīm* and *'ain* are all "strong" consonants, they appear not only in *rujū'* and *raja'a,* but in all other words derived from the same root. The letter *wāw* is a "weak" consonant, however, and it therefore disappears from certain derivatives of any root in which it occurs. Thus the hypothetical form *tawaba* is actually pronounced *tāba,* and since it is written as it is pronounced, the root connection with the noun *tauba* is slightly disguised.

He is saying in effect (Almighty and Glorious is He): "Come back *[irji'ū]* to Me, instead of following the whims and passions of your own lower selves *[nufūs]*, and instead of indulging in the satisfaction of your carnal desires, for then you may well succeed in obtaining your dearest wish in My presence, in the life hereafter *[ma'ād]*. You may enjoy My gracious favor forever, dwelling in the abode of perpetual rest and permanent repose *[dār al-baqā' wa'l-qarār]*. You may prosper and triumph and attain salvation, and, through My mercy, you may be admitted to the Highest Garden of Paradise, which has been made ready to receive the righteous."

He has also addressed the believers in more specific and more exacting terms, for He has said (Exalted is He):

> O you who believe, turn to Allāh in repentance—in sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will acquit you of your evil deeds, and will admit you into Gardens beneath which rivers flow. (66:8)

What is meant by sincere repentance *[tawba naṣūḥ]* is the kind of repentance that is wholly and purely for the sake of Allāh (Exalted is He), entirely devoid of any ulterior motive whatsoever. The adjective *naṣūḥ* is derived from the same root as the noun *niṣāḥ*, which is the Arabic word for a plain thread used in sewing. This kind of repentance is therefore quite simple and straightforward, without complications and free from attachments.

With such a thread to guide him, the servant will keep to the straight path of worshipful obedience, without veering off toward sinful disobedience. He will not indulge in furtive maneuvers like the sly tricks of the fox. He will not persuade himself to lapse back into behaving like a rebel and committing the odd sin now and then. He is committed to abstaining from all sins for the sake of Allāh, purely and simply, just as he used to commit them purely and simply to satisfy his whims and passions, in order that He may bring him to a good end.

Repentance *[tawba]* of every kind of sin must be regarded as a necessary duty *[wājiba]*, for it is classed as such by the consensus of the entire Islāmic community *[ijmā' al-umma]*.[151]

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[151] In the technical vocabulary of Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]*, the term *wājib* (or *wājiba*, when it refers to a grammatically feminine word like *tawba*) is applied to a religious duty that is "necessary," but which cannot be classed as "absolutely obligatory" *[farḍ]*. It is not permissible to accuse an unrepentant sinner of being an unbeliever *[kāfir]*, as Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh has stated most emphatically in an earlier chapter (Vol. 1, p. 216).

In the Qur'ān, Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) has made more than one mention of those who repent *[at-tā'ibīn]*. Let us consider, for instance, His glorious words:

> Truly, Allāh loves those who repent, and He loves those who keep themselves clean. (2:222)

Thus He has let us know that He loves them on account of their repentance, and because they keep themselves clean, meaning free from the contamination of sins that would set them far apart from Him (Almighty and Glorious is He).

Allāh (Exalted is He) has also said:

> [Triumphant are] those who repent [to Allāh], those who serve [Him], those who praise [Him], those who fast, those who bow, those who fall prostrate [in worship], those who enjoin what is right and fair and forbid what is wrong and unfair, and those who keep the limits of Allāh. And give good tidings to the believers! (9:112)

In this case, He begins with a specific reference to a particular set of people, namely, those who repent, then He goes on to qualify them with all those other praiseworthy attributes. In so doing, He is giving us to understand that the penitent *[tā'ib]* is the kind of person who fits this description. From this it follows naturally that such a person must be worthy of the good tidings conveyed to those who possess true faith *[īmān]*, in accordance with His words: "And give good tidings to the believers!"

Various opinions of the scholars concerning the number and nature of the major sins *[kabā'ir]*.

As we have been made aware by the One who has summoned us to repentance *[tauba]*, a distinction does exist between major sins *[kabā'ir]* and minor sins *[saghā'ir]*. Among the religious scholars *['ulāmā']*, however, there is considerable disagreement concerning the number and nature of the major sins.

Certain scholars maintain that there are no more than three major sins, while others set the number at four, seven, nine, or eleven. Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "The major sins are seven in number." But whenever this was mentioned in the hearing of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), he would say: "Their true number is much closer to seventy than to seven!" Then he would go on to say: "Anything that Allāh has forbidden constitutes a major sin."

According to some authorities, the exact number of the major sins is something that cannot be stated with certainty, since this is one of those matters that have been kept deliberately vague, like the date of the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* and the moment of the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Jam']*.[152] Where these two events are concerned, the ambiguity serves the purpose of encouraging people to make the effort to discover the timing for themselves. Similarly, in the case of the major sins, the ambiguity is intended to make people extra cautious, to the point of giving up all sins of any kind.

Some say that anything which Allāh has threatened to punish with the Fire of Hell must constitute a major sin. For others, the definition of a major sin is "anything for which the penalty, here in this world, is a punishment specifically prescribed by Islāmic law *[ḥadd]*."[153]

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[152] Literally, the Day of the [Final] Congregation.

[153] The specific punishments prescribed by Islāmic law *[ḥudūd*, pl. of *ḥadd]* are: (1) For *zinā* in the sense of adultery: stoning *[rajm]*. (2) For *zinā* in the sense of fornication: one hundred lashes. (3) For *qadhf* [false accusation of adultery]: eighty lashes. (4) For apostasy *[ridda]*: death. (5) For drinking intoxicating liquor *[shurb]*: eighty lashes. (6) For theft *[sariqa]*: amputation of the right hand. (7) For highway robbery *[qaṭ' aṭ-ṭarīq]*: (a) amputation of hands and feet (for robbery only); (b) death by the sword or crucifixion (for robbery with murder).

A certain learned man, one of those well versed in the knowledge of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), has given us the following account of his research concerning the number and nature of the major sins:

"They add up to a total of seventeen. Four of them are committed within the heart, namely:

1. Associating partners with Allāh [*shirk bi'llāh*].
2. Stubborn persistence in disobedience toward Allāh.
3. Despairing of the mercy [*rahma*] of Allāh.
4. Daring to consider one's deceitfulness safe from detection by the ingenious devices [*makr*] of Allāh.

The next four are committed by the tongue, namely:

5. Bearing false witness [*shahādat az-zūr*].
6. An unsubstantiated accusation of adultery against a married person of unblemished reputation [*qadhf al-muhsan*].[154]
7. Deliberately premeditated perjury [*yamīn ghamūs*], i.e., making a statement—under oath—which results in a false claim being established as true, and a rightful claim being dismissed as unfounded, or in the wrongful seizure of the property of a Muslim—be it no more than a piece of tooth stick [*siwāk*][155] from the thorny tree called *arāk*.[156]
8. Uttering the incantations of sorcery and witchcraft [*sihr*].

Three are committed in the belly, namely:

9. The drinking of wine [*khamr*] and any other beverage that causes intoxication [*muskir*].
10. Wrongfully consuming the property of an orphan.
11. Knowingly consuming unjustified profit [*ribā*].

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[154] In order to escape the penalty of eighty lashes incurred under Islāmic law by a person making such an accusation, the accuser would have to produce four male witnesses of impeccable character, each of whom would be required to testify that he had actually seen "the pen in the pen-holder."

[155] The *siwāk* is a small stick, softened at the tip by chewing or beating to form a kind of toothbrush, the use of which is a traditionally recommended practice [*sunna*] for anyone performing the Islāmic ritual ablution [*wudū'*].

[156] According to the Arabic lexicographers, the *arāk* is not only the best tree for tooth sticks (made from its branches, and more especially from its roots), it is also "the best of all the trees upon which camels and other beasts feed, with respect to the odor of the milk produced by those animals." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *'–R–K*.)

below. Then the stars *[kawākib]* were provided as missiles *[rujūm]* to be thrown at him.

So he and his offspring will be pelted with the stars and cursed with damnation until the Final Hour is at hand. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> [And we have adorned the lower heaven with lamps] and We have made them missiles to be thrown at the devils *[wa ja'alnāhā rujūman li'sh-shayāṭīn]*. (65:7)

Concerning the minor sins *[ṣaghā’ir]*, which are innumerable.

As far as the minor sins *[ṣaghā’ir]* are concerned, there are far too many of them to be counted. We have no means by which to identify them all with absolute precision, and no list of them can ever be regarded as fully comprehensive. Nevertheless, we do know how to recognize them through the indications provided by the sacred law *[shar‘]*, as well as by the light of our perceptive faculties, for the aim of the sacred law is to advance the spiritual progress of the heart, so that it may draw nearer and nearer to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) by refraining from the commission of sins. As He has told us (Exalted is He):

> Forsake the outer aspect of sin, and the inner aspect of it as well. (6:121)

A list of typical minor sins would include the following:

1. Eyeing, kissing, and lying in bed with a person one finds physically attractive, but without engaging in sexual intercourse.
2. Insulting and abusing a Muslim brother, but without going so far as to smear his character with a false accusation of sexual misconduct *[qadhf]*,[158] and without subjecting him to a physical beating.
3. Backbiting *[ghība]*.[159]
4. Malicious and mischievous misrepresentation *[namīma]*.
5. Telling outright lies.

The list could go on and on, but it would need a very lengthy commentary.

When the believer *[mu’min]* turns in repentance from the major sins *[kabā’ir]*, the minor sins *[ṣaghā’ir]* are implicitly covered by his act of repentance, because Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

> If you avoid the major sins that you are forbidden to commit, We will acquit you of your evil deeds, and We will admit you by a gate of honor. (4:31)

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[158] See note [153] above.

[159] Backbiting *[ghība]*, i.e., saying bad things about someone in the absence of the person concerned, is considered extremely reprehensible, regardless of whether those things happen to be true or false.

Rather than taking this for granted, however, the penitent believer should make a serious effort to be conscious of all the sins he is giving up, the minor as well as the major, when he comes to the point of declaring his repentance *[tauba]*.

In the words of the poet:

You must forsake all kinds of sin, the great and the small alike,
for such is the pious duty of the righteous and devout.
You must advance as you would when treading over thorny ground,
avoiding the prickly spots and casting warily about.
Do not rule out a little sin as trivial in itself;
since mountains are made of pebbles,
they can never be ruled out.

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once stopped to make camp, he and his Companions, in a dry river bed in which there was no firewood, and nothing else as far as they could see. Nevertheless, he told them to go and gather firewood. When they said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, we cannot see any firewood to collect,' he replied: 'Do not rule out anything you can get hold of, however insignificant it may seem at first glance.'

"So, the men set about collecting whatever odds and ends they could find, bit by bit, until they had eventually stacked up an enormous pile. He then said to his Companions: 'Don't you see? This is just how it happens with all those individual items of good and evil that are so readily dismissed as insignificant. One little sin gets piled on top of another little sin, one big sin on top of another big sin, something good on top of something else that is good, and something evil on top of something else that is evil.'"

Some say that when a sin appears tiny in the eyes of the servant [of the Lord], it becomes enormous in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He), but then, if the servant comes to see it as enormous, it becomes tiny in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He). It is actually because of the enormous strength of his faith *[īmān]*, and the high level of understanding he has attained through experience *[ma'rifa]*, that the believing servant comes to attach enormous importance to even a little sin.

As we know from one of the sayings *[hadīth]* traditionally ascribed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The believer *[mu'min]* looks upon his sin as a mountain towering high above him, so he is afraid that it may topple down upon him, whereas the hypocrite *[munāfiq]* sees his sin as nothing more than a fly that comes buzzing around his nose, so he tries to flick it away.

A certain wise man said: "The unforgivable sin is the one that is perpetrated when a man dares to say: 'How I wish that every sin I committed could be as trivial as this!'"

The point of this remark is that he could not bring himself to say such a thing, if it were not for the incompleteness of his faith *[īmān]*, the weakness of his intuitive understanding *[ma'rifa]*, and the woeful inadequacy of his knowledge *['ilm]* concerning the Majesty of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). If he had any cognition of that Divine Majesty *[Jalāl]*, he would regard the little sin as a big one, and the insignificant offense as an enormous one. He would heed the following advice, which Allāh (Exalted is He) conveyed to one of His Prophets by way of inspiration:

> Pay no attention to the smallness of the gift, but do pay attention to the greatness of the One who gives it. Pay no attention to the paltry nature of the offense, but do pay attention to the grandeur of the One you are offending with it.

This explains why that wise man then went on to say: "When someone holds an illustrious rank and an exalted station in the sight of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), for him there is no such thing as a minor sin *[ṣaghīra]*. As far as he is concerned, even the slightest misdemeanor represents the commission of a major sin *[kabīra]* against Allāh (Exalted is He)."

One of the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to his friends among the Successors *[Tābi'īn]*:[160] "Some of the misdeeds you people commit are obviously less significant, in your eyes, than a slender strand of hair, whereas we, during the lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), would have counted them among the deadliest of sins *[mūbiqāt]*."

If he felt able to say such a thing, it was surely because of his closeness

[160] In his *Malfūẓāt [Utterances]*, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) says: "Of them [the people of the Lord] He has made firm anchors for the religion *[dīn]*. The senior rank among them is that of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), junior to this is the rank of the Companions *[ṣaḥāba]*, and below this again is the rank of the Successors *[tābi'ūn]*. They always put what they say into practice, carrying it out in word and deed, in private and in public." (See p. 26 of the Al-Baz edition of this work in English translation.)

to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and to Allāh (Glorious is His Majesty). As far as the ignorant person [*jāhil*] is concerned, certain types of behavior may be quite inconsequential, but for someone who has acquired knowledge [*'ālim*] they can assume enormous importance. The ordinary person may be allowed to get away with things that would not be tolerated in the case of a person with spiritual experience [*'ārif*], depending on the extent of the disparity that exists between them in knowledge [*'ilm*], experience [*ma'rifa*], and stage of spiritual development [*manzila*].

Repentance [*tawba*] is a personal religious obligation [*fard 'ain*], incumbent upon every single individual.[161] It is inconceivable that any member of the human race could be exempt from the duty to repent. In the first place, it is highly unlikely that there is any human being who has never committed acts of sinful disobedience with the limbs and organs of his physical body. Even if such a person does exist, he will almost certainly be guilty of sins committed within his heart. In the improbable event that he is indeed innocent on that score too, he can hardly be impervious to the whispering [*waswās*] of the Devil, insinuating all manner of notions [*khawāṭir*][162] that are calculated to distract him from the remembrance of Allāh (Exalted is He). Finally, if he does pass even that well-nigh impossible test, he will still be found guilty of some kind of negligence, and of leaving some gap in his knowledge of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), with respect to His attributes [*ṣifāt*] and His actions [*af'āl*].

In all of this, there is an appropriate degree of strictness corresponding to each of the various stages experienced by the believers [*manāzil al-mu'minīn*] in the development of their spiritual states [*aḥwāl*] and stations [*maqāmāt*]. For every particular spiritual state [*ḥāl*], there are particular acts of worshipful obedience [*ṭā'āt*] to be performed, particular sins [*dhunūb*] to be avoided, and particular guidelines [*ḥudūd*] and conditions [*shurūṭ*] to be observed.

To observe these requirements is to be in a state of worshipful obedience, while any neglect or heedless omission is counted as a sin, and sin necessitates repentance *[tawba]*. Repentance means that the believer must abandon the devious course *[ta'wīj]* upon which he finds himself embarked, and return to the track of the straight path *[sanan aṭ-ṭarīq al-mustaqīm]* that has been clearly charted for him by the sacred law, leading to a situation that has been established for him, and to an honorable position that has been made accessible to him.

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[161] In Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*], a distinction is drawn between *fard 'ain*, i.e., a religious duty that is incumbent on every individual Muslim, and *fard 'ala'l-kifāya*, meaning a collective duty, incumbent on the Islāmic community as a whole, though not on every individual Muslim.

[162] On the subject of 'notions' [*khawāṭir*, pl. of *khāṭir*], see pp. 32–40 above.

Everyone stands in need of repentance, so the difference between one set of people and another can only be a matter of degree. As far as the ordinary people *['awāmm]* are concerned, repentance means turning away from sins *[dhunūb]*. For the élite *[khawāṣṣ]*, repentance means turning away from heedless negligence *[ghafla]*. In the case of the élite of the élite *[khāṣṣ al-khāṣṣ]*, repentance means turning away from letting the heart rely upon anything apart from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

It was actually Dhu'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī ["the Egyptian"][163] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "As far as the ordinary people are concerned, repentance means turning away from sins. For the élite, repentance means turning away from heedless negligence." And it was Abu'l-Ḥusain an-Nūrī who said: "Repentance means that you are turning away from everything apart from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)."

How vast is the difference between each person and the one mentioned after him in the following list:

1. The penitent who is turning in repentance from simple lapses and mistakes *[zallāt]*.
2. The penitent who is turning in repentance from sins of heedless negligence *[ghafalāt]*.
3. The penitent who is turning in repentance from thinking too highly of his own good deeds *[ru'yat al-ḥasanāt]*.

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[163] Dhu'n-Nūn Abu'l-Faiḍ (or Fayyāḍ) Thawbān ibn Ibrāhīm al-Miṣrī was born at Ikhmīm in Upper Egypt, ca. A.H. 180/796 C.E., the son of a Nubian father. His life is shrouded in obscurity, in spite of the many legends related about him in detailed biographies by later authors. It can be stated with a fair degree of certainty, however, that he lived in Cairo, and that he traveled extensively. We also know that he was arrested (like Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal) for upholding the traditional Islāmic doctrine that the Qur'ān is uncreated, in opposition to the Mu'tazilite thesis that was espoused by some of the 'Abbāsid Caliphs. He was transported to Baghdād, released after a term of imprisonment, and returned to die at Giza near Cairo in A.H. 245/859 C.E. According to A.J. Arberry (art. DHU 'L-NŪN in *SEI*):

> "His sayings display the same intensity of style and rich imagery which characterize such other [Islāmic saints] as Junaid and Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī. His skill in epigrams is illustrated by the saying: 'Make yourself dead during the days of your lifetime, that you may live among the dead when you are gone.'"

4. The penitent who is turning in repentance from letting his heart feel at ease with anything other than the Creator of all creatures *[Khāliq al-bariyyāt]*.

The Prophets (peace be upon them) were certainly not beyond the need for repentance. Just consider the saying traditionally ascribed to our own Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> A coating of rust is always threatening to cover my heart, so I beg forgiveness of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) no less than seventy times every day and night.

As soon as Adam (peace be upon him) had eaten the fruit of the forbidden tree, all the clothes he had been wearing immediately stripped themselves off his body and scattered in every direction, leaving him with his private parts exposed to view. His head was still covered, however, because his crown and diadem felt too embarrassed to take themselves off and leave him bareheaded, so Gabriel (peace be upon him) had to come and take the crown *[tāj]* from his head and the diadem *[iklīl]* from his brow.

Adam and Eve then heard the voice of the Lord, as He told them: "Get yourselves down below, the pair of you, out of My vicinity, for no one who disobeys Me can be allowed to dwell in close proximity to Me."

So Adam turned to Eve in shame, as he said to her: "This first disastrous act of sinful disobedience has resulted in our expulsion from the vicinity of the Beloved, obliging us to accept the necessity of repentance *[tawba]*, humble entreaty *[taḍarru']*, begging like a pauper *[iftiqār]*, submissive resignation *[istikāna]* and abasement *[dhilla]*—and all this after we had been so accustomed to a comfortably settled way of life *['aish qārr]*."

They had in fact been accustomed to a way of life in which they enjoyed enormous power and wealth, great luxury, honor and dignity, gracious favor, and exalted rank in the noblest of situations— in those that are most pure, in those that are most secure, and in those that are nearest to Allāh (Exalted is He). So, if there had ever been anyone who could dispense with repentance, who could feel quite safe from any hostile force, be it the mischief of the lower self *[nafs]* or the whispered insinuations *[waswās]* and cunning machinations of the Devil *[Shaiṭān]*, and who could pride himself on the nobility and purity of his situation, on his nearness to Allāh and the closeness of his station, the person most obviously matching this description would surely have been Adam (peace be upon him). Yet he stood in need of repentance [and of having his repentance accepted], until Allāh relented toward him, as we know from His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> Then Adam received certain words [of revelation] from his Lord, and He relented toward him. He is indeed the Relenting One, the All-Compassionate. (2:37)

Al-Ḥasan the son of ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with them both) is reported as having said:

"When Allāh relented toward Adam (peace be upon him), the angels offered him their congratulations. Gabriel (peace be upon him) came down from on high, along with Mīkāʾīl and Isrāfīl (peace be upon them both), and they all said: 'O Adam, be of good cheer, for Allāh has relented toward you!' Adam (peace be upon him) responded to this by saying: 'O Gabriel, if there is any question still to be asked after this acceptance of my repentance, it is: "Where do I stand now?"'

"Allāh therefore conveyed to him by way of inspiration: 'O Adam, you have bequeathed to your descendants a legacy of trouble and toil, while I have made them heirs to [the benefits of] repentance *[tauba]*. This means that, whenever any of them appeal to Me in prayer, I shall answer their call, just as I have answered your call, and whenever any of them beg Me to grant them forgiveness, I shall not give them a grudging response, for I am Ever-Near *[Qarīb]* and Ever-Ready-to-Respond *[Mujīb]*. O Adam, when the Day of Resurrection comes, I shall assemble in the Garden of Paradise all those who turn in repentance from their sins. I shall bring them forth happy, laughing and rejoicing from their graves, and their supplication *[duʿāʾ]* will receive a positive response.'"

The case of the Prophet Noah *[Nūḥ]* (peace be upon him) is essentially similar to this. In response to his plea, Allāh (Exalted is He) drowned all the inhabitants of the East and the West, in order to defend his honor, and to show the intensity of His anger toward them for having called him a liar. He is in fact the second Adam, because all surviving human creatures must be descended from his offspring, if we are to believe the statement that none of the people who were with him aboard the Ark succeeded in producing any children, apart from his own three sons, whose names were Ḥām, Sām and Japhet *[Yāfith]*.

whom was himself the commander of a further hundred thousand, whereas the total strength of Solomon's army consisted of four hundred thousand soldiers, two hundred thousand being members of the human race, while the other two hundred thousand were drawn from the ranks of the jinn. The disparity between the two armies was clearly enormous, yet the king with his smaller army was enabled to be victorious, on account of his worshipful obedience, while the queen with her vastly larger army was vanquished, on account of her unbelief *[kufr]* and her sinful disobedience.

You must therefore acknowledge the fact, O human being, that Islām will surely prevail, and that it will not be overcome.

> And Allāh will not grant the unbelievers any way [by which to triumph] over the believers. (4:141)

Likewise in your case, O you who have access to the help and guidance of Allāh, as long as you truly believe *[āmanta]*, you will be safe *[aminta]*, not only from your enemies in this world, but also from Allāh's blazing fire in the world of the hereafter. The Fire of Hell will put itself at your service. It will bow its head silently before you, and it will show you the way [to pass through in safety], treating you with honor and respect in obedience to the commandment of its Master *[Mawlā]* and in compliance with His instructions. It will actually say to you: "Pass on through, O believer, since your light has extinguished my flame!"[93]

If you have earned the right to be addressed with such courtesy and politeness by the Fire of Hell, it must mean that you are a truly dignified and enlightened person. Since you are clad in the robe of honor conferred by the King, and since you bear the distinctive mark of the kind of dignity that always commands respect, it is incumbent upon all the royal attendants and slaves to treat you with the utmost reverence and solemnity, and to put themselves at your service.

As for the unbeliever *[kāfir]* and the rebellious sinner, the Fire of Hell will fly into a furious rage against them. It will wreak vengeance on them with all the vindictiveness of a cruel tyrant, when he takes his revenge on the enemy he has just defeated in battle.

[93] Although he does not mention the attribution here, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well-pleased with him) has told us elsewhere, notably in the Thirteenth Discourse of *Revelations of the Unseen [Futūh al-Ghaib]*, that this saying can be found in "traditions reliably ascribed to the best of humankind, the best of those ever carried by the earth and sheltered by the sky, Muhammad the Chosen (Allāh bless him and give him peace)."

selected him for the office of Messengership *[Risāla]*. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) engaged in verbal conversation *[kalām]* with him, brought him up to be a servant and a spokesman for Himself,[164] and imbued him with His love.[165] He also helped him to substantiate his Prophetic claims by means of the spectacular miracles *[mu'jizāt]* performed with the hand and the staff, as well as the nine marvelous portents *[āyāt]* and all the things that happened to him in the wilderness, such as the pillars of light that appeared in the night, the manna *[mann]* and the quails *[salwā]*. Moses (peace be upon him) was blessed with these and other signs and wonders that had not been granted to any of the Prophets before him, and yet even he acknowledged the need for repentance. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

> He said: "My Lord, forgive me and my brother, and enter us into Your mercy, for You are the Most Merciful of the merciful." (7:151)

The Prophet David (peace be upon him) is another case in point, despite the loftiness of his rank, and the fact that Allāh bestowed such a mighty kingship upon him. His royal guards were thirty-three thousand strong. Whenever he recited the Psalms *[Zabūr]*, the birds would alight in rows upon his head; the water would halt the flow of its restless current; human beings and jinn would line up in orderly ranks all around him, and the savage beasts and reptiles would do the same, without harming one another in any way; the mountains would resound with the proclamation of his glory; hard iron would turn soft and pliable to serve his needs.

He had all this at his disposal, to magnify his stature and preserve his authority, yet he wept incessantly for forty days while bowing in prostration, until green grass sprouted from the ground where his tears kept falling. It was then that Allāh (Exalted is He) had mercy on him and relented toward him. It was then that He (Almighty and Glorious is He) accepted his repentance and said:

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[164] An allusion to the verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān in which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) says to Moses (peace be upon him):

> And I have reared you for Myself *[wa'ṣṭana'tuka li-Nafsī]*. (20:41)

Some of the traditional Qur'ānic commentators interpret this to mean: "I have reared you [or, I have chosen you] for Myself, to establish My evidence and to serve as My spokesman between Me and My creatures, in such a way that your doing it will be the same as My doing it Myself." According to others, the meaning is: "I have reared you [or, I have chosen you] for Myself, for a special affair which I require you to accomplish in a sufficient manner, concerning Pharaoh and his forces." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. Ṣ–N–'.)

[165] An allusion to the verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān in which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) says to Moses (peace be upon him):

> And I have imbued you with love from Me *[wa alqaitu 'alaika mahabbatan minnī]* (20:39)

> So We forgave him that, and he enjoyed access to Our presence and a happy journey's end. (38:25)

In the case of David's son Solomon (peace be upon them both), repentance proved to be a very painful experience indeed, in spite of his mighty kingship. He even had a wind at his beck and call, a wind that he could command to blow in one direction for a month, and then for a month in the opposite direction. So great was his sovereign power, as a matter of fact, that no one has ever wielded the like of it since his time. When he was condemned to suffer punishment for his sin, on account of the sculptured image he had worshipped in his palace for a period of forty days, he went wandering about for some time with a haughty expression on his face. He would ask for food by making a gesture with the palms of his hands, so he was not given anything to eat. When he tried saying: "You must give me something to eat, for I am Solomon, the son of David," he received a crack in the skull, a beating, and some very rude comments—apart from being simply dismissed as a liar.

One day, as he was being chased away from a house he had approached to ask for food, a woman spat in his face. According to one traditional report, an old woman once came out with a jar full of urine, which she proceeded to pour all over his head.

He continued to suffer this kind of degradation, until Allāh brought forth the signet ring *[khātam]* from the belly of a fish *[hūt]*, and gave it to him. He then wore the signet ring until the end of the forty days, that is to say, for the duration of his punishment. As soon as that period had expired, the birds came flocking to him, and the jinn, the devils and the wild beasts all came and gathered around him. Now that he was recognized by those who had despised him and beaten him, they offered him their apologies for all the bad treatment they had meted out to him, but he said: "I do not blame you for whatever you did before, nor do I praise you for what you are doing now. This whole business came from the presence of my Lord, so everything about it has been inevitable."

It was at this point that Allāh accepted his repentance and relented toward him, and so He restored his kingship to him, granting him even greater scope and authority than before (peace be upon him).

Well then, if such was the spiritual condition of all these great masters and leaders, these governors of the people and administrators of the sacred law [*shar'*], these deputies [*khulafā'*] of Allāh among His creatures, what are we to say about your spiritual condition, about you and your state of delusion, O miserable wretch?

There you are, in the house of illusion [*dār al-ghurūr*], within the territory allotted to the devils as their feudal estate [*iqṭā' ash-shayāṭīn*], surrounded by all the hostile forces in the realm of creation, such as whims and passions [*hawā*], the mischief of the lower self [*nafs*], the lusts of the flesh [*shahawāt*], willful desires [*irādāt*], insidious temptations [*wasāwis*], and the seductive and glamorized enticements of Satan [*Shaiṭān*].

You beguile yourselves with the outer forms of worship [*'ibādāt ẓāhira*], such as fasting [*ṣawm*], the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], the alms-due [*zakāt*] and the pilgrimage [*hajj*], and with physical abstinence from external acts of sinful disobedience, while your inner being [*bāṭin*] is utterly devoid of the inner forms of worship. There is nothing but an empty blank in the space that ought to be filled with the virtues of pious caution [*wara'*], unhurried deliberation [*ta'annī*], devotion to duty [*taqwā*], detachment from worldly concerns [*zuhd*], patience and perseverance [*ṣabr*], contentment [*riḍā*], frugal satisfaction [*qanā'a*], absolute trust [*tawakkul*], commitment [*tafwīḍ*], conviction [*yaqīn*], a sense of integrity [*salāmat aṣ-ṣadr*], personal generosity [*sakhāwat an-nafs*], the cultivation of good grace [*muruwwa*], good intention [*niyya*], active good will [*iḥsān*], seeing things in a favorable light [*ḥusn aẓ-ẓann*], goodness of character [*ḥusn al-khuluq*], a good approach to daily life [*ḥusn al-ma'āsh*], good spiritual experience [*ḥusn al-ma'rifa*], excellent obedience [*ḥusn aṭ-ṭā'a*], honesty [*ṣidq*], sincerity [*ikhlāṣ*], and many other such qualities, which could be listed at very great length.

As far as your content is concerned, you are stuffed to the full with disgustingly immoral traits of character. You are stuffed with the mothers of all sins [*ummahāt adh-dhunūb*], from which all kinds of torment and catastrophe are spawned, including every lethal and soul-destroying affliction in this world and the hereafter: such as the fear of poverty, resentment of the destiny [*qadar*] decreed by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), reluctance to accept His judgment concerning His creation, and harboring suspicions about Him in this regard, as well as doubting the fulfillment of His promise.

In listing these deadly vices we must also make mention of malicious spite *[ghill]*, rancor *[ḥiqd]*, envy *[ḥasad]*, and cheating *[ghishsh]*, along with the pursuit of high rank and status, the love of praise and approbation, the love of worldly prestige, being content with this world and feeling perfectly at home in it, overbearing pride and arrogance toward the servants of Allāh, and turning up one's nose in haughty disdain. As Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> And when he is told: "Be careful of your duty to Allāh," vainglory traps him in sin. (2:206)

The list continues with anger *[ghaḍab]*, fanaticism *[ḥamiyya]*, scornful contempt *[anafa]*, the love of political power *[riyāsa]*, animosity *['adāwa]*, hatred *[baghḍā']*, greedy ambition *[ṭama']*, avarice *[bukhl]*, tight-fistedness *[shuḥḥ]*, covetousness *[raghba]*, timidity *[rahba]*, excessive hilarity *[faraḥ]*, impertinence *[ashar]*, cockiness *[baṭar]*, aggrandizing the rich and belittling the poor, boastfulness *[fakhr]*, conceitedness *[khuyalā']*, ruthless competition *[tanāfus]* and boastful rivalry *[mubāhāt]* in the advancement of your worldly interests, the pursuit of superficial notoriety *[riyā']* and fame *[sum'a]*, disregarding the truth in order to give yourself an air of importance *[istikbār]*, becoming engrossed in matters that are none of your business *[khawḍ fī mā lā ya'nī]*, indulging in a lot of talk *[kathrat al-kalām]* for no good purpose, bragging *[tīh]* and showing off *[ṣalaf]*, prying *[ikhtibār]* into the affairs of other people (while neglecting your valid concerns and leaving your worship to chance), engaging in fawning *[tamalluq]* and trying to gain influence through flattery *[iqtidār]*, treating the commandment of Allāh as something of little or no importance *[tahāwun]*, treating mere creatures with veneration *[tawqīr]* and exaggerated respect *[mudāhana]*, taking conceited pride *['ujb]* in your accomplishments, loving the praise you receive for things you have not done, preoccupation with the faults of your fellow creatures and blindness to your own shortcomings, forgetting the blessings of Allāh and attributing them to yourself (or to your fellow creatures, who are merely the instruments and tools for the delivery of those blessings), confining your attention to the outer form *[ẓāhir]* and making no effort to examine the basic roots *[uṣūl]*, failing to observe the

> But he smiled, laughing at its words, and he said: "My Lord, dispose me to be thankful for Your blessing, with which You have blessed me and my parents, and to do righteous work that shall be well-pleasing unto You; and include me, through Your mercy, in [the company of] Your righteous servants." (27:19)
>
> And he reviewed the birds; then he said: "How is it that I do not see the hoopoe? Or is he among the absentees?" (27:20)

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When Solomon (peace be upon him) had moved on from the Valley of the Ants, in the course of his journey from Jerusalem *[Bait al-Maqdis]* to the Yemen, he led his people into a barren desert, where they were soon afflicted by thirst and started begging for water. In response to this need, he looked all around in search of the hoopoe *[hudhud]*, inquiring if anyone had seen him. He summoned the Captain of the Birds *[Amīr aṭ-Ṭuyūr]*, who happened to be the Numidian crane *[kurkī]*, and asked him if he knew where he was. Knowing that there was only one hoopoe in his company, the Numidian crane replied: "I have no idea where he went off to; he did not get his orders from me."[67]

Solomon (peace be upon him) had a very good reason for trying to find the hoopoe, since he wanted the bird to probe the ground with his beak, in order to let him know the depth at which water could be found, whether close to the surface or far beneath it, as measured by the fathom *[qāma]* or the parasang *[farsakh]*.[68]

The hoopoe was uniquely well equipped for this task, endowed as he was with a special expertise that none of the other birds possessed. Whenever he was required to perform this operation, he would fly up to a great height in the atmosphere, till he reached a vantage point from which to scan the earth below. Then, having spotted a plot of land containing water, he would swoop down upon it, sticking his beak into the ground in order to mark the spot for excavation.

At this point the devils *[shayāṭīn]* would waste no time in playing their part, by digging a well on that same plot of land. The water would soon come gushing forth, and they would direct it into basins, ponds and watering troughs. Flasks and water skins and other vessels could now

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[67] In the First Discourse (p. 6 above), the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) states that some traditional authorities equate the Numidian crane *[kurkī]* with the bird called *ghurnūq* or *ghurnayq*. This may have some bearing on its status as Captain of the Birds *[Amīr aṭ-Ṭuyūr]*.

[68] The *qāma* [fathom] is equal to six feet, while the *farsakh* [parasang, or league] is three miles of the Hāshimī measure.

They are the ones who put their trust in Him with quiet confidence, remaining steadfast through adversity and constantly diligent in service. They are the ones who enjoy the blessings of grace, who wear the robes of honor, and who bear the insignia that mark the loyal adherents *[khulaṣā']* of the All-Merciful, the Lord of Glory. They are the ones who are safe in this world from the effects of political upheaval and civil strife, safe in their graves from the awful terror of the interrogation [by the angels Munkar and Nakīr] and the crushing pressure, and [they are the ones who will be] safe at the Resurrection from prolonged examination and desolate loneliness. They are the ones who will dwell forever in the abode of everlasting life, in a permanent state of bliss and happiness and joy and gladness. They are the ones who will be favored there with every kind of pleasant and refined delight, every hour, every moment and every single instant.

You are also lulled into a sense of false security by the worldly goods that have been placed at your disposal, by the free rein you have been granted in the pursuit of your worldly ambitions and desires, and by the extent to which you have been relieved of worldly cares.

You have therefore come to feel that you are in no danger of being deprived of the gifts, the favors and the benefits that once belonged to others, but which have since been handed down from them to you. They have been handed down from people long past and gone, from Pharaoh and Hāmān and Qārūn, from Shaddād and 'Ād, from Caesar and Chosroes *[Kisrā]*,[166] from kings who reigned in ancient times, and from nations that have ceased to exist.

This world had its fun and games with those people. It encouraged them to entertain false hopes and aspirations, so that, when Allāh's commandment came, the illusion emboldened them to disobey Allāh, and they were prevented from obtaining what they most desired. They were gathered together and then scattered apart. They were separated from the goods they had once been allowed to call their own. They were driven from the beds they had made so comfortable for themselves. They were obliged to make their departure from the stately mansions they had erected. They were deprived of the power and glory they had so triumphantly acquired, and of the regal authority they claimed and imagined to be theirs by right. Then they were called to account for all

[166] Chosroes or Khosrau (*Kisrā* in Arabic) was the title of the ancient Kings of Persia.

the deposits that had been entrusted to their charge, and for all the loans they had been assigned to administer with responsible care.

What they were now receiving from Allāh was an experience they had not anticipated. They were brought face to face with the wickedness of their conduct, and interrogated in minute detail concerning the evil deeds they had perpetrated. They were locked up in the narrowest cells in the jails of this world, where they had once imprisoned their own victims, and made to suffer the harshest treatment they had ever imposed on those victims. They were sentenced to undergo the most extreme form of punishment they had ever inflicted on others. They were scorched by the Fire of Hell, into which they were thrust with their hands and feet shackled and chained. They were forced to eat the infernal diet called *zaqqūm*[167] and *ḍarīʻ*,[168] and they were given boiling hot water to drink. They were also driven into a state of mental disorder by means of a certain slimy, poisonous substance *[min ṭīnati khabālin tuyyimū]*.[169]

You can surely learn some valuable lessons from these people of times gone by. If you pause to consider how many of them were taken into captivity and torn from their families, you will see this as a warning to beware of claiming to possess what they have left behind. You will beware of settling down to live in the buildings they constructed, and from which they were eventually expelled, since they committed so many acts of tyranny and oppression in the places they built.

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[167] Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) first mentioned *zaqqūm* when He said:

> The tree of *az-zaqqūm* is the food of the sinner. (44:43,44)

According to some Qur'ānic commentators, when the notorious Abū Jahl heard this revelation, he responded by saying: "Dates and fresh butter! We shall swallow it at our leisure." Allāh (Exalted is He) thereupon sent down the grim warning:

> We have assigned it as a torment for the evildoers. It is a tree that sprouts at the very bottom of Hell. The spathes thereof are like the heads of devils, and they must eat of it, and with it they must fill their bellies. (37:63–6)

[168] Like *zaqqūm*, the infernal food called *ḍarīʻ* is mentioned in the Qur'ān, in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> There shall be no food for them except *aḍ-ḍarīʻ*. (88:6)

According to the Arabic lexicographers, *aḍ-ḍarīʻ* is "a certain plant in water that has become altered for the worse by long standing or the like, having roots that do not reach the ground," or "a certain thing in Hell, more bitter than aloes, and more stinking than the carcass, and hotter than the fire." See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *D–R–ʻ*. (Pickthall translates *aḍ-ḍarīʻ* as "bitter thorn-fruit.")

[169] The meaning of this sentence is by no means crystal clear to the translator, who derives some comfort from the fact that it was evidently somewhat puzzling to the editor of the Damascus edition. In a footnote to the Arabic text, the latter suggests (with the wise qualification: "*Allāhu Aʻlam* [Allāh knows best]") that it may refer to the drinking of wine, which has an intoxicating effect in this world and deadly consequences in the hereafter. (According to some lexicographers, one meaning of *khabāl* is "the fluid squeezed, or wrung, or flowing, from the inhabitants of Hell, or from their skins." See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *KH–B–L*.)

How many a side and back, how many a cheek and head, they must have injured and flogged! How often they must have caused the eye of some wretchedly poor and miserable beggar to weep and stream with tears! How many a rich man of good repute they must have degraded and reduced to poverty! How many times they must have given legal force to some heretical innovation *[bid‘a]*, and promulgated regulations to establish some bad practice! How often they must have broken and enraged the heart of someone who offered them nothing but wise and sensible advice! How often, in the shadow of the night, it must have been possible to hear a prayer of supplication *[du‘ā’]*, a sad lament, or a mournful voice, as people of good heart cried out to the All-Merciful *[Raḥmān]* in protest against their tyranny, complaining to Him about them as a way of expressing their grief and pain.

Those plaintive cries were immediately brought to the notice of the One who is All-Aware *[Khabīr]*, for the noble angels have been appointed to discharge that very task. The victims of oppression went speeding toward Him, till they reached their destination and found themselves in the presence of the Almighty King *[al-Malik al-‘Aẓīm]*, the One who is Just and Fair *[Munṣif]*, instead of being a cruel tyrant. The inner contents of their breasts were obvious to the One who is All-Glorious *[‘Azīz]*, All-Wise *[Ḥakīm]*, and All-Knowing *[‘Alīm]*, and nothing could be hidden from the One who is All-Aware *[Khabīr]*, whether they declared it openly or tried to keep it to themselves, as He examined every aspect of what they were complaining and clamoring about. Then the All-Glorious and Majestic One *[al-‘Azīz al-Jalīl]* assured them:

> I will surely help you, even if only after a while *[la-anṣuranna-kum wa-law ba‘da ḥīn]*.[170]

He has indeed appointed a time of harvest, when tyrannical and wrongdoing groups of people are bound to reap what they have sown. [In the Qur’ān, for instance, after mentioning the violent destruction of the tribes of Thamūd and ʿĀd,[171] He asks His Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):]

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[170] A non-Qur’ānic Divine Saying *[Ḥadīth Qudsī]*.

> And now can you see any remnant of them? (69:8)

For one set of tyrants the harvest has been destruction by drowning in the ocean; for another, by sinking into the earth and being swallowed up beneath its surface; for another, by being used as the firewood of Hell; for another, by being put to the slaughter; and for another, by the transmutation of their outer forms *[maskh aṣ-ṣuwar]*. In the case of yet another group, destruction has taken the form of transmutation affecting their spiritual contents *[maʿānī]*, in that He has rendered their hearts as hard as deaf stones, then stamped them with the stamp of unbelief *[kufr]*, sealed them with the seal of idolatrous polytheism *[shirk]*, coated them with rust, and covered them with darkness, for neither submission *[islām]* nor faith *[īmān]* were ever going to take firm root in them. And then:

> He gripped them with an exceedingly tight grip. (69:10)

He seized them with all the force ever used by a tyrant *[jabbār]*,[172] then thrust them into the Abode of Ruin *[Dār al-Bawār]*.[173]

> As soon as their skins are well and truly burned, We shall exchange them for fresh skins, so that they may taste the torment. (4:56)

Thus they will be forever undergoing punishment, constantly exposed to infernal heat *[jaḥīm]*, struggling to swallow food that always sticks like a lump in the throat, and suffering excruciating agony. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

> There they must abide as long as the heavens and the earth endure. (11:107)

They are in a place where they can never die, and which they can never leave. There is no end to their woe, nor is there any limit to their wailing. The life they must lead there is a narrow life of utter misery.[174]

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[171] As for Thamūd, they were destroyed by the thunderbolt, and as for ʿĀd, they were destroyed by a fierce roaring wind. (69:5,6)

[172] An allusion to the verse *[āya]* of the Qurʾān:

> And when you seize by force, do you seize with the force of tyrants? (26:130)

[173] An allusion to the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> Have you not seen those who exchanged the bounty of Allāh for thanklessness, and caused their people to dwell in the Abode of Ruin? (14:28)

[174] An allusion to the warning in the Qurʾān:

> But if anyone turns away from remembrance of Me, for him there will be a narrow life, and We shall bring him forth blind to the assembly on the Day of Resurrection. (20:124)

On the doctrine that the Qur'ān consists of intelligible letters and audible sounds.

We are firmly convinced that the Qur'ān consists of intelligible letters *[ḥurūf mafhūma]* and audible sounds *[aṣwāt masmū'a]*, because it is through these that any person, who would otherwise be mute and speechless, becomes an articulate speaker *[mutakalliman nāṭiqan]*, and the Speech of Allāh *[Kalāmu'llāh]* (Almighty and Glorious is He) is not exceptional in this regard. Anyone who rejects this belief must therefore be stubbornly irrational and blind to the obvious.

Allāh Himself (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> *Alif Lām Mīm*. That is the Book.... (2:1,2)[197]
>
> *Ḥā Mīm*. The sending down of the Book is from Allāh.... (40:1,2)[198]
>
> *Ṭā Sīn Mīm*. Those are the signs *[āyāt]* of the lucid Book. (26:1,2)[199]

Thus He has mentioned certain letters [of the Arabic alphabet] and He has used them metonymically, as a way of alluding to the Book itself. He has also said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> And even if all the trees in the earth were pens, and the sea, with seven seas after it to replenish it, [were ink], the Words of Allāh would still not be exhausted. (31:27)

Thus He has clearly assigned to Himself such a multitude of words *[kalimāt]* that they are infinite in number. The same message is conveyed by His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> Say: "If the sea were ink for the Words of my Lord, the sea would be used up before the Words of my Lord were exhausted." (18:109)

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[197] The Arabic letters *Alif Lām Mīm* also occur in 3:1, 29:1, 30:1, 31:1 and 32:1.

[198] The Arabic letters *Ḥā Mīm* also occur in 41:1, 42:1, 43:1, 44:1, 45:1 and 46:1. In the case of 42:1, they are immediately followed (in 42:2) by the letters *'Ain Sīn Qāf*.

[199] The Arabic letters *Ṭā Sīn Mīm* also occur in Qur'ān 28:1.

Concerning the preconditions of repentance *[tawba]* and the manner in which it must be carried out.

As for the preconditions that must be satisfied before repentance *[tawba]* can be valid, they are three in number:

1. The penitent must feel remorse *[nadam]* for all the transgressions he has ever committed. This is based on the clear statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Remorse is a form of repentance *[an-nadam tawba]*.

The symptoms that most clearly indicate the genuine quality of remorse are: (a) the delicate sensitivity *[riqqa]* of the heart, and (b) the copious shedding of tears.

This explains the significance of the saying attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> You must sit in the company of those who repent *[at-tawwābīn]*, for they are very tenderhearted *[araqq af'ida]*.

2. The renunciation of all forms of misbehavior *[zallāt]* under all circumstances and at all times.

3. The strong determination never to repeat the acts of disobedience *[ma'āṣī]* and the sinful errors *[khaṭī'āt]* of which one has previously been guilty.

This is the import of the response given by Abū Bakr al-Wāsitī, when someone asked him a question about sincere repentance *[tawba naṣūḥ]*,[175] for he said: "It means that no trace of sinful disobedience remains attached to the person who is repenting, neither in private nor in public. When someone's repentance is sincere, he is not the least bit worried about anything that may lie in store for him that night or the morning after."

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[175] The questioner was obviously alluding to the expression used by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), when He says in the Qur'ān:

> O you who believe, turn to Allāh in repentance—in sincere repentance! (66:8)

Remorse does indeed give rise to a strong determination [*ʿazm*] and a clear sense of purpose [*qaṣd*]. The remorseful person acquires a strong determination never to repeat the acts of disobedience and sinful errors of which he has been guilty in the past, because with the experience of remorse comes the realization that sins create a barrier between him and his Lord, and that they make it impossible for him to enjoy the pleasurable aspects of life in this world without incurring grave consequences in the hereafter.

This is neatly expressed in the traditional saying [*khabar*] that has been handed down to us [and which may be attributed to the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace)]:[176]

> All because of just one sin he happens to have committed, the servant [of the Lord] must forfeit a great deal of the worldly benefit that would otherwise be his portion [*rizq*].

Also relevant in this context is the traditional saying:

> Unlawful sexual intercourse [*zinā*][177] brings poverty in its wake.

To quote the wise words of one of the few who are qualified to speak from real experience [*ʿārifīn*]:

"Whenever you notice a change for the worse, a narrowing tendency in your way of life, increasing difficulty in making ends meet, and growing disorder in your state of being, you need to realize that you must be ignoring the commandment of your Master [*Maulā*] and following your personal whims and desires [*hawā*]. "Whenever you become aware that the hands and tongues of other people have gained control over you, and that you have succumbed to malignant influences affecting yourself, your wife, your property and your children, you need to realize that you must be guilty of violating the prohibitions established by the sacred law, failing to discharge your obligations [*ḥuqūq*], transgressing the legal bounds [*ḥudūd*] and breaking the rules [*rusūm*].

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[176] As used by the relaters of tradition, the term *khabar* is sometimes synonymous with *hadīth*, meaning a report than can be traced all the way back to the Prophet Muhammad himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace), whether the substance of that report be a saying of his or a description of his behavior in a certain situation. In some cases, however, the term *khabar* is applied to a tradition that may well have originated with the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), but which can only be traced with certainty to one of his Companions, or to some other reliable early source.

[177] In the vocabulary of Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*], the Arabic word *zinā* covers both adultery and fornication. For a precise technical definition, see J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 178.

"Whenever you notice that cares, worries and anxieties have piled up on a massive scale within your heart, you need to realize that you must be reluctant to accept what your Lord has destined and decreed for you, doubtful about the fulfillment of His promise, guilty of associating *[mushrik]* His creatures with Him as if they were partners in His business, unwilling to place your trust in Him, and unhappy with His management of you and the rest of His creation."

Once the penitent has come to recognize the truth of all this, through examining his spiritual condition and reflecting on it, he will experience a feeling of remorse. What is meant by remorse *[nadam]* is the kind of heartache *[tawajju' al-qalb]* that a person feels on learning of the loss of someone very dear to him, so the penitent is bound to go through a long and painful process of sighing and sobbing, sorrowing and grieving, weeping and moaning, and pouring out all the feelings he needs to express in words. He will therefore be determined never to put himself through anything like that again, now that his own experience has taught him just how terrible are the consequences of sinful disobedience. He has learned that it is far more harmful than any deadly poison, than any beast of prey, than any blazing fire or the cutting edge of any sword. He has also learned that the true believer *[mu'min]* must not let himself be stung twice by a scorpion from the same hole, so he flees out of sheer necessity from sinful disobedience in all its forms, just as he would flee from those physically obvious dangers and perils.

In all forms of sinful disobedience there lies the risk of absolute damnation *[halāk kullī]*, while eternal salvation *[salāma abadiyya]* means blissful well-being not only in this world but also in the life hereafter, so if only sins had never been created and had never come to be! Many a moment of passion has brought a long period of grief in its wake, has been the cause of a terrible disease, has brought a long life to a disastrous conclusion, and has even condemned an entire nation to the Fire of Hell.

As for the clear sense of purpose *[qaṣd]* that is generated by the experience of remorse, along with the strong determination *['azm]* we have just been discussing, it may be defined as the wish and intention to make amends *[tadāruk]*. One aspect of this relates to the immediate present, inasmuch as the remorseful penitent feels obliged to desist forthwith from every forbidden thing *[maḥẓūr]* with which he has been and continues to be involved, and to discharge every religious duty that is incumbent upon him at the present moment. A second aspect of it relates to the past, since he also feels obliged to make amends for previous omissions. Then there is a third aspect, which relates to the future, for he recognizes that he must persevere henceforth until death in the practice of worshipful obedience, and in refraining from sinful disobedience.

As far as the aspect relating to the past is concerned, the following requirements must be met by the penitent who genuinely wishes to make amends: He must begin by casting his mind back to the day when he first reached the age of puberty and experienced proof of his sexual maturity *[iḥtilām]*.[178] Then he must make a thorough survey of his life from that time on, year by year, month by month, day by day, hour by hour, and breath by breath, checking to see where and when he failed to perform certain acts of worshipful obedience correctly, and where and when he was guilty of perpetrating certain sins of disobedience.

Let us start by considering some instances where acts of worshipful obedience *[ṭā'āt]* have either been omitted altogether or have been inadequately performed:

1. In the case of the Islāmic ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, the need to make amends may be due to the fact that a particular ritual prayer was totally omitted by the person concerned. It may also be due to his having performed the ritual prayer without observing its necessary preconditions *[sharā'iṭ]* and without including all its essential elements *[arkān]*.[179] For instance:

(a) He may have performed the ritual prayer without first performing the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']*.

(b) He may have performed the ritual ablution, but done so imperfectly, through neglecting either a basic prerequisite, like the formulation of the intention *[niyya]*, or some of the necessary elements *[wājibāt]*, such as rinsing out the mouth *[maḍmaḍa]*,[180] snuffing water up the nostrils *[istinshāq]*, and washing the face as well as certain other parts of the body.

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[178] The term *iḥtilām* refers specifically to the involuntary emission of seminal fluid during a dream.

[179] The necessary preconditions *[sharā'iṭ]* and basic essentials *[arkān]* of the ritual prayer are listed and discussed in Vol. 1, pp. 8–13.

[180] The full definition of the term *maḍmaḍa* is "moving water all around inside the mouth, then spitting it out and ejecting it."

(c) He may have performed the ritual prayer in an article of clothing that was stained with a foul impurity *[najis]*, in one made of silk *[ḥarīr]*, or in one acquired by illegal means *[ghaṣb]*; or he may have performed it on land acquired by usurpation *[arḍ maghṣūba]*.

The penitent is required to make up for all the ritual prayers he ever omitted or performed defectively, from the time he reached puberty *[bulūgh]* right up to the moment of his repentance *[tawba]*. First of all, he must concentrate on making up for those that are classed as obligatory *[farā'iḍ]*. He must devote himself continuously to the performance of compensatory prayers, interrupting the process only when he would otherwise miss the period of time prescribed for one of the obligatory prayers of the current day. At this point he is obliged to perform the prayer in question as a present duty *[adā']*, but then he must immediately apply himself again to the task of making up for past omissions, continuing in this fashion until he has compensated for them all.

If other worshippers gather in his presence, he should join them when they pray as a congregation *[jamā'a]*, while formulating the intention that his own prayer is to be one of compensation *[qaḍā']*. He should then go on praying in his usual manner, until the period of time for praying together with the Imām has almost expired, at which point he should perform the currently due prayer on his own, as a present duty. The advantage of following this procedure is that it serves to ensure the correct sequence in the performance of compensatory worship.

This is a necessary requirement *[wājib]* according to our doctrine,[18] [rather than an absolute obligation], which means that if the penitent does formulate the intention, when joining the congregational prayer led by the Imām, to perform that prayer as a present duty, he will be treated with leniency and granted a dispensation from having to repeat that particular prayer. Nevertheless, the procedure first mentioned is really the proper course, especially for one who has previously been a mixer *[mukhliṭ]* in his religious life. Allāh (Exalted is He) is referring to such people when He tells us:

> And [there are] others who have acknowledged their faults. They mixed a righteous action with another that was bad. It may be that Allāh will relent toward them. Allāh is indeed All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate. (9:102)

[18] When he uses the expression *'indanā* [in our opinion; according to our doctrine], the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is no doubt referring to the doctrine of the Ḥanbalī school *[madhhab]* of Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]*.

When a person is a mixer, he is sometimes influenced predominantly by faith *[īmān]*, and his behavior is quite excellent as long as that is the case. He is diligent in performing his ritual prayer *[salāt]*, in keeping the fast, and in guarding against causes of defilement and things forbidden by the sacred law *[shar']*. He treats his religion *[dīn]* with the utmost care and respect. At other times, however, he gets carried away by mischief, with the result that Satan causes him to stumble and slip.

Whenever this happens, he is likely to perform his ritual prayer in a state of impurity, and to become quite lax in his attitude toward its preconditions *[sharā'it]*, its basic essentials *[arkān]* and its necessary elements *[wājibāt]*.[182] He may attend to some of these requirements, while forgetting about the rest. He may perform the ritual prayer one day, and then skip it altogether for the next few days, or he may perform one or two of the daily prayers, and skip the rest of the five that are obligatory.

In order to make amends, therefore, the penitent who has been such a mixer must begin by making a very serious effort to examine his personal record in matters of this kind.

Provided that he can review his performance of a particular religious duty, and can feel certain beyond any doubt that he attended to every element of it—fully and completely—in a manner permitted by the sacred law *[shar']*, there will be one obligation at least for which he does not have to make up, although he will still have to make up for all the rest. If he is really looking after his own best interests, however, he will be committed to judging his own conduct by the most rigorous standards, and he will therefore decide to make up for absolutely everything.

This is indeed a wise precaution, a good investment for the benefit of his own soul in the life hereafter, an expiation *[kaffāra]* and atonement *[taraḍḍī']* for all the offenses with which he will be charged on the Day of Resurrection, and a passport to high levels in the Garden of Paradise, assuming that he dies in a state of repentance *[tawba]*, true to Islām and faithful to the Sunna [the noble example set by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)].

As we have explained, the remorseful penitent must first of all make up for omissions and shortcomings in the performance of those religious duties that are classed as obligatory [*farā'iḍ*]. Once he has completed this task, he may find that Allāh has deferred his appointment with death and granted him a respite; that He has accepted him as fit for His service, approved him for His worshipful obedience, and established him therein; that He has included him among those worthy of His love; that He has delivered him from error; that He has extricated him from the companionship of Satan and from allegiance to him, as well as from addiction to his own whims and passions and the gratification of his lower self [*nafs*], and that He has thereby caused him to turn his back on his interest in this world, and directed him toward his interest in the hereafter.

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[182] The nine necessary elements *[wājibāt]* of the ritual prayer *[sālāt]* are listed and discussed in Vol. 1, p. 14.

If such be the case, he must set about making up for omissions and shortcomings in the performance of those religious duties that are classed as firmly established customary practices [*sunan mu'akkada*], including those that normally form part of every ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*],[183] along the lines we have described in connection with the strictly obligatory duties [*farā'iḍ*].

Then, once he has dealt with the firmly established customary practices [*sunan mu'akkada*] connected with the obligatory ritual prayers, the penitent should devote the same kind of attention to recommended but noncompulsory observances, such as the prayers called *tahajjud*,[184] the prayer of night vigil [*ṣalāt al-lail*], and the recitation of litanies [*aurād*],[185] which we shall be discussing toward the end of this book, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills.

2. In the case of the Ramaḍān fast [*ṣaum*], the need to make amends may be due to the fact that it was not kept during a period of travel or sickness.

Other possible reasons are that the person concerned once broke the fast for some deliberate purpose [before the normal time for breaking fast], even though he was in his place of residence at the time, or that one night, whether deliberately or because of absentmindedness, he neglected to formulate the intention [*niyya*] to keep the fast during the following day.[186]

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[183] See Vol. 1, pp. 14 and 15.

[184] The term *tahajjud* is sometimes synonymous with *ṣalāt al-lail* [the prayer of night vigil]. In the present context, however, since the latter is mentioned separately, *tahajjud* probably refers to the voluntary prayers performed after the compulsory prayer of late evening [*'ishā'*]

[185] Etymologically, the term *wird* [plural: *aurād*] means "to go down to a watering place." In the context of Islamic worship, it refers to a definite time of day or night devoted to private prayer (over and above the five daily prayers), as well as to the 'litany' recited on this occasion. In its simplest form, the *wird* consists of four cycles [*raka'āt*] of prayer, with the recitation of one seventh of the Qur'ān.

Whatever the reason may have been, the penitent is obliged to make up for all his omissions. If he is in any doubt, he must make a thorough review of his past performance in this area, in an effort to resolve the uncertainty. Then he should make up for any omission of which he is reasonably sure. He may assume that the rest of his fasting was properly performed, unless he prefers to take the most prudent and cautious approach, in which case it will be better for him to repeat all his previous fasts without exception.

He should reckon from the time when he reached puberty [*bulūgh*] right up until the moment of his repentance [*tauba*]. Then, if he counts ten years in the interval between those two events, he should fast for ten extra months. If twelve years have elapsed, he should fast for a whole extra year, treating every month of the year as if it were the month of Ramaḍān.

3. In the case of the alms-due [*zakāt*], the penitent must base his reckoning on the total value of all his property assets.[187] He must also count however many years have elapsed since he first acquired ownership of any part of that property, not just since the time he reached puberty and came to be regarded as a person of sound mind, because payment of the alms-due [*zakāt*] is incumbent on the juvenile [*ṣabī*] and even on the insane [*majnūn*] according to our interpretation of Islāmic doctrine.[188] He will therefore be obliged to produce the whole of the amount for which he is liable, and to pay it over to those legally entitled to receive it, such as the destitute [*fuqarā'*] and the indigent [*masākīn*], to mention only two of the eight classes of beneficiaries mentioned in the Qur'ān.[189]

If he has already paid the full amount due for certain years, although he is still behind with his payments for other years, he must do the necessary accounting and then pay whatever happens to be outstanding.

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[186] This subject is treated at length in Vol. 1, pp. 21–23.

[187] For a detailed treatment of the alms-due [*zakāt*], see Vol. 1, pp. 17–19.

[188] See note [181] above.

[189] The eight classes are mentioned in the following Qur'ānic verse [*āya*]:

> The alms are only for the poor and the needy, and those who work to collect them, and those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and to free the slaves and the debtors, and for the Cause of Allāh, and [for] the wayfarers: a duty imposed by Allāh. Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (9:60)

He is under no strict obligation to overcompensate for what he has properly discharged in the past, as we have explained above in connection with fasting *[ṣawm]* and ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

4. In the case of the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, there may have been a point in the penitent's life when all the preconditions for its performance had been satisfactorily accounted for,[190] as far as his personal situation was concerned, so that it actually became his religious duty to prepare for the undertaking and embark upon it. Let us suppose, however, that he dillied and dallied, neglecting the opportunity until he became impoverished. For a short period of time, he found himself in a situation where the necessary preconditions could no longer be fulfilled, but now—since he has recovered his capacity—he must once again regard it as his duty to leave home and set out for Mecca in order to perform the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*.

Even if he cannot find the money for the journey, he is under the obligation to embark upon it, penniless though he may be, as long as he is physically capable of traveling away from home. If he really cannot manage to do it without any money, he must find some lawful means *[halāl]* by which to earn enough to pay for provisions and a camel to ride. If he cannot earn enough, he should ask people to treat him as a would-be pilgrim, and therefore as an appropriate recipient of part of their obligatory alms-due *[zakāt]* and their voluntary charitable donations *[ṣadaqāt]*, because the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* comes under the heading of the Cause *[Sabīl]* according to our interpretation of the Islāmic doctrine. The Cause of Allāh is one of the eight categories [of beneficiaries entitled to this kind of support], as He Himself has told us (Almighty and Glorious is He).[191]

So, if he should die before discharging this obligation, our would-be penitent will die a disobedient sinner, because he failed to seize the opportunity to perform the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, which is a religious duty that must be performed at the earliest opportunity, according to our interpretation of the Islāmic doctrine,[192] based on the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If a person can find provisions for the journey and a riding camel to transport him to the House [of Allāh], yet he does not perform the Pilgrimage, he may as well die as a Jew or a Christian.

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[190] For a detailed treatment of the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, see Vol. 1, pp. 26–46.

[191] See note [181] above.

[192] See note [189] above.

All of the foregoing is intended to emphasize the importance of respect for the commandment of Allāh, to encourage the utmost care in observing it, and to inspire fear at the prospect of missing the opportunity to carry it out.

In addition to all that we have said about making amends for omissions and shortcomings in the basic religious duties of ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, fasting *[ṣaum]*, alms-due *[zakāt]* and Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, we should also advise the penitent that he is obliged to settle any outstanding acts of atonement *[kaffārāt]* and solemn vows *[nudhūr]*, and that he should proceed with prudent caution in these matters, as we have explained elsewhere.[193]

Now that we have considered how the penitent needs to go about making amends for all the acts of worshipful obedience *[ṭā'āt]* that he has either omitted altogether or performed inadequately, let us consider how he should make amends for all the acts of sinful disobedience *[ma'āṣī]* of which he has ever been guilty.

Where acts of sinful disobedience are concerned, what is required of the penitent is that he conduct a painstaking self-examination, starting from the time when he first reached puberty *[bulūgh]*, in the course of which he must review the behavior of his faculty of hearing, his faculty of sight, his tongue, his hands, his feet, his genitals, and all the other limbs and organs of his physical body. Then, once he has taken a really close look at every day and every moment he has lived through since that time, he must compile for his personal reference a detailed register *[dīwān]* of all the acts of sinful disobedience he has ever committed, so that he can study them all with care, taking stock of the minor transgressions *[ṣaghā'ir]* as well as the major offenses *[kabā'ir]* amongst them.

He must also make the effort to remember each and every one of them in context, by reminding himself of the companions who were with him at the time and who participated with him in the perpetration of those sinful acts, by recalling the places where he yielded to temptation, and by revisiting those situations in which he assumed that he would be concealed from prying eyes, forgetting about those eyes that never sleep and never glance away from him, not even for the split second it takes for a human eye to blink:

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[193] For instance, in Vol. 1, p. 97, where we read:

Obedience to parents cannot go so far as to include the abandonment of obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]*, such as the testimony of Islām *[ḥujjat al-islām]*, the five ritual prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]*, payment of the alms-due *[zakāt]*, an act of atonement *[kaffāra]* or the fulfillment of a solemn vow *[nadhr]*.

> And yet over you there are watchers, Noble Recorders, who know whatever you do. (82:10–12) Not a word does he utter, without there being an observer at the ready by his side. (50:18)

He had obviously forgotten all about these noble guardian angels, but his heedlessness did not alter the fact that:

> He has attendant angels ranged before him and behind him, watching over him as instructed by the commandment of Allāh. (13:11)

It could not alter the fact that they are always there to record all the things that he does, even the breaths that he breathes, so that he can be called to account for them all [on the Day of Resurrection]. Needless to say, he had also forgotten about the One who knows the secret and that which is more deeply hidden still,[194] who knows the inner content of His servants' breasts,[195] and is All-Aware *[Khabīr]* of what His creatures try to conceal and what they reveal in public.[196]

Next, the penitent must check through all the entries he has made in his register of sins, noting which of them represent violations of the right *[haqq]* of Allāh (Exalted is He), and of His right alone, as distinct from those which also constitute acts of wrongdoing and injustice *[mazālim]* in the sphere of human rights. The distinction between these two categories is very important, so let us now consider each of them in turn:

1. Sins that violate the right *[ḥaqq]* of Allāh (Exalted is He).

If sins belong in this category, making amends for them is entirely a matter between the sinner and Allāh (Exalted is He). Offenses of this kind include the following:

(a) Adultery and fornication *[zinā]*.

(b) Imbibing intoxicating liquor *[shurb al-khamr]*.

(c) Listening to distracting musical entertainments *[samā' al-malāhī]*.

(d) Staring at a person of the opposite sex who is neither one's spouse nor a relative within the prohibited degrees of marriage *[an-naẓar ilā ghairi maḥram]*.

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[194] In the Qur'ān, Allāh says of Himself (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> He surely knows the secret and that which is yet more deeply hidden *[fa-innahu ya'lamu's-sirra wa akhfā]*. (20:7)

[195] Allāh is indeed Aware of the hidden content of the breasts *[inna'llāha 'Alīmun bi-dhāti 's-sudūr]*. (3:119)

[196] Allāh most certainly knows what they try to keep secret and what they publicly proclaim *[lā jarama anna'llāha ya'lamu mā yusirrūna wa mā yu'linūn]*. (16:23)

(e) Sitting in the mosque *[masjid]* while one is in a state of ritual impurity *[junub]*.

(f) Touching a copy of the Qur'ān *[muṣḥaf]* without having cleansed oneself first by performing the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']*.

(g) Adopting any heretical innovation *[bid'a]* as if it were an article of faith.

In cases like these, repentance *[tawba]* is expressed through remorse *[nadam]* and regret *[taḥassur]*, and by offering apologies *[i'tidhār]* to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). The penitent must make a careful assessment of the scale and scope of each offense, in terms of its frequency and duration. He must then endeavor to perform a good deed commensurate with each act of sinful disobedience, until the good deeds added to his credit are sufficient in every respect to cancel out all the bad deeds in his account. This is based on the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> Surely the good deeds will drive away the evil deeds. (11:114)

In order to emphasize the point, we may also quote the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Be aware of your duty to Allāh wherever you may be, and always follow a bad deed with a good deed in order to cancel it out.

For each bad deed, therefore, the way to ensure atonement *[takfīr]* is by means of a good deed of approximately the same type. In other words, the closer the comparison between the act of expiation *[kaffāra]* and the corresponding act of sinful disobedience, the more appropriate the act of expiation will be. This point can best be made clear by providing a number of examples:

(i) For the sin of imbibing intoxicating liquor *[shurb al-khamr]*, the most appropriate atonement the penitent could make would be to offer, as a donation to some charitable cause *[taṣadduq]*, whatever lawful beverage *[sharāb ḥalāl]* he himself prefers, the one he personally considers to be the tastiest of them all.

(ii) For the sin of listening to distracting musical entertainments *[samā' al-malāhī]*, what atonement could be more appropriate than listening to the recitation of the Qur'ān, the traditions *[aḥādīth]* of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and the stories of the righteous *[ḥikāyāt aṣ-ṣāliḥīn]*?

He is under no strict obligation to overcompensate for what he has properly discharged in the past, as we have explained above in connection with fasting *[ṣawm]* and ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

4. In the case of the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, there may have been a point in the penitent's life when all the preconditions for its performance had been satisfactorily accounted for,[190] as far as his personal situation was concerned, so that it actually became his religious duty to prepare for the undertaking and embark upon it. Let us suppose, however, that he dillied and dallied, neglecting the opportunity until he became impoverished. For a short period of time, he found himself in a situation where the necessary preconditions could no longer be fulfilled, but now—since he has recovered his capacity—he must once again regard it as his duty to leave home and set out for Mecca in order to perform the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*.

Even if he cannot find the money for the journey, he is under the obligation to embark upon it, penniless though he may be, as long as he is physically capable of traveling away from home. If he really cannot manage to do it without any money, he must find some lawful means *[halāl]* by which to earn enough to pay for provisions and a camel to ride. If he cannot earn enough, he should ask people to treat him as a would-be pilgrim, and therefore as an appropriate recipient of part of their obligatory alms-due *[zakāt]* and their voluntary charitable donations *[ṣadaqāt]*, because the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* comes under the heading of the Cause *[Sabīl]* according to our interpretation of the Islāmic doctrine. The Cause of Allāh is one of the eight categories [of beneficiaries entitled to this kind of support], as He Himself has told us (Almighty and Glorious is He).[191]

So, if he should die before discharging this obligation, our would-be penitent will die a disobedient sinner, because he failed to seize the opportunity to perform the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, which is a religious duty that must be performed at the earliest opportunity, according to our interpretation of the Islāmic doctrine,[192] based on the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If a person can find provisions for the journey and a riding camel to transport him to the House [of Allāh], yet he does not perform the Pilgrimage, he may as well die as a Jew or a Christian.

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[190] For a detailed treatment of the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, see Vol. 1, pp. 26–46.

[191] See note [181] above.

[192] See note [189] above.

Concerning the preconditions of repentance [*tawba*] and the manner in which it must be carried out.

As for the preconditions that must be satisfied before repentance [*tawba*] can be valid, they are three in number:

1. The penitent must feel remorse [*nadam*] for all the transgressions he has ever committed. This is based on the clear statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Remorse is a form of repentance [*an-nadam tawba*].

The symptoms that most clearly indicate the genuine quality of remorse are: (a) the delicate sensitivity [*riqqa*] of the heart, and (b) the copious shedding of tears.

This explains the significance of the saying attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> You must sit in the company of those who repent [*at-tawwābīn*], for they are very tenderhearted [*araqq af'ida*].

2. The renunciation of all forms of misbehavior [*zallāt*] under all circumstances and at all times.

3. The strong determination never to repeat the acts of disobedience [*ma'āṣī*] and the sinful errors [*khaṭī'āt*] of which one has previously been guilty.

This is the import of the response given by Abū Bakr al-Wāsitī, when someone asked him a question about sincere repentance [*tawba naṣūḥ*],[175] for he said: "It means that no trace of sinful disobedience remains attached to the person who is repenting, neither in private nor in public. When someone's repentance is sincere, he is not the least bit worried about anything that may lie in store for him that night or the morning after."

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[175] The questioner was obviously alluding to the expression used by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), when He says in the Qur'ān:

> O you who believe, turn to Allāh in repentance—in sincere repentance! (66:8)

The point would seem to be that the murderer *[qātil]* has annihilated one slave, a servant of Allāh (Exalted is He) who would otherwise still be capable of worshipful obedience to Him, and since he has thereby violated a right *[ḥaqq]* of His, he has been commanded to effect the resurrection of another slave just like him, another servant of Allāh (Exalted is He).

For this to be realized in practice, the slave must be emancipated from the bondage of slavery *[riqq al-'ubūdiyya]*, so that he can be free to function by and for himself, without let or hindrance. Thus the act of annihilation *[i'dām]* is offset by the act of bringing into being *[ījād]*.

Before we move on to our next topic, let us bear in mind that we have thus far been discussing the subject of atonement only insofar as it relates to violation of the right *[ḥaqq]* of Allāh (Exalted is He).

2. Atonement for the violation of human rights *[ḥaqq al-'ibād]*.

As far as violations of human rights *[ḥaqq al-'ibād]* are concerned, we have only four categories to consider, namely: (a) cases involving persons *[nufūs]* who have been caused to suffer the loss of life or limb; (b) cases where pecuniary resources and property assets *[amwāl]* have been usurped; (c) cases where good reputations *[a'rāḍ]* have been besmirched; and (d) cases where people have been badly affected in their hearts *[qulūb]*, but where the injury was strictly confined to the realm of the inner feelings.

(a) Within the category of cases involving persons who have been caused to suffer the loss of life or limb, the particular offense for which the penitent needs to atone may be an accidental homicide *[qatl khaṭa'an]*. If such be the case, his penance can only be accomplished through payment of the blood money *[diya]*, which must be handed over directly to those relatives of the victim who are entitled to receive it, or to a trustee appointed to act on their behalf, or to the Imām [leader of the Islāmic Community].

Under normal circumstances, the responsibility will not be discharged until the blood money *[diya]* has actually reached the ultimate beneficiaries, whether the payment comes from the killer's clan *['āqila]*[200] or from the [public treasury administered by] the Imām. Their claim may be rendered null and void, however, in a case where the killer has no clansmen [*ʿāqila*] to make the payment on his behalf, and where there are no funds available in the public treasury [*bait al-māl*], because even though the killer may be personally capable of paying the necessary sum, his legal obligation is limited, in the absence of an *ʿāqila*, to the emancipation of a believing slave [*ʿitq raqaba muʾmina*]. The better course would be for him to pay the blood money [*diya*] as a voluntary gesture, in which case he would definitely be acting of his own free will, since payment of the blood money [*diya*] is strictly incumbent upon no one apart from the *ʿāqila*. According to our interpretation of the Islāmic doctrine, which is undoubtedly the correct interpretation, it is not permissible to exact payment from the killer in person.[201]

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[200] The term *'āqila* is applied to those relatives who are traditionally required to band together in order to raise the blood money *[diya]* on behalf of a clan member who has committed unintentional homicide. They must be relatives descended from one common father.

If the penitent is guilty of intentional homicide [*qatl ʿamdan*], however, the only way for him to clear his conscience is by exposing himself to the possibility of retaliation [*qiṣāṣ*].[202] The same is also true in a case of intentional but less than fatal wounding, provided that the mutilation was inflicted on a part of the victim's body such that equal retaliation is a feasible operation.[203]

If the homicidal attack proved fatal to his victim, the repentant killer will have to discuss the consequences with the victim's closest legal heir

[201] **Author's note:** There are some, however, who maintain that payment of the blood money [*diya*] is actually incumbent on the killer in such a case [i.e., in a case where he is personally capable of paying the necessary sum] despite the fact that he has no clansmen to act as his *ʿāqila*, and they hold the view that legal action may be taken to exact it from him.

This is the doctrine adopted by the school [*madhhab*] of ash-Shāfiʿī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), on the grounds that payment of the blood money [*diya*] is incumbent on the killer himself in the first instance, although some of the responsibility may subsequently be assumed by the *ʿāqila*, for the sake of lightening his burden, lending him their support and sharing his obligation to make reparation, as is quite proper in view of the relationship that exists between them in terms of mutual rights of inheritance [*tawāruth*].

In a case like this, where there is no *ʿāqila* to be taken into account, jurists of the Shāfiʿī school will argue that the full liability must rest with the killer himself, especially when he is supposed to be in a state of repentance [*tauba*], determined to separate himself from all forms of injustice [*maẓālim*], intent on leading a life of piety [*tawarruʿ*], and eager to atone for any offenses by which he may have violated the rights of his fellow human beings [*ḥuqūq al-ādamiyyīn*].

[202] The Islāmic law of retaliation [*qiṣāṣ*] is based on the verse [*āya*] of the Qurʾān in which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

> And We prescribed for them therein [in the Torah]: "A life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, and for wounds retaliation." But if anyone forgoes it as a freewill offering, that shall be an expiation for him. (5:45)

[203] Equal retaliation is a feasible operation if the assailant has caused the victim to lose a foot, for example, or his nose. Cases where retaliation is not a feasible operation include those that would involve the breaking of any bones apart from the teeth.

[wārith]. If it resulted in less than fatal injury, on the other hand, he must hold that discussion with his victim in person. Perhaps the parties concerned will be disposed to waive their right to exact retaliation, in which case, if they simply decide to grant him an outright pardon *['afw]*, the case will be closed without further ado. If they offer him a pardon in exchange for a financial consideration, he will have acquitted himself of his liability as soon as he has paid them the stipulated amount.

In a case of intentional homicide where the identity of the murderer has hitherto been unknown to anyone but himself, the penitent killer is obliged to confess his guilt to the *walī ad-dam* [the guardian of the blood, i.e., the relative of the victim who is entitled to exact retaliation], and he must be prepared to let this person be the judge as to whether he should live or die. The *walī ad-dam* may then grant him an unconditional pardon, if he wishes to do so, or he may kill him, if he chooses to go to the other extreme, or he may prefer to take the middle course and accept a financial compensation from him in exchange for a pardon. It is not permissible, in a case like this, for the penitent killer to keep his identity concealed, because repentance in the abstract *[mujarrad at-tawba]* is not enough to relieve him of the burden of guilt.

A different approach is called for, however, if the penitent has killed a multitude of victims at various times and in widely scattered places, especially if it all happened long ago, so that he does not even know exactly how many people he has killed—let alone who their executors *[awliyā']* might be. In a case like this, the penitent must make sure that his repentance is as good as it could possibly be, and that his conduct is correspondingly improved. He must impose upon his own lower self *[nafs]* the legal penalty *[hadd]* prescribed by Allāh, by subjecting it to a variety of strenuous exertions and punishing tasks. He must extend forgiveness to those who treat him unjustly and do him harm. He must pay for the emancipation of slaves. He must make financial contributions to charitable causes. He must perform many supererogatory acts of worship *[nawāfil]*. He must do all these good deeds so that, on the Day of Resurrection, he will be able to distribute among his victims the spiritual reward he has earned in the process, giving them all their shares in proportion to their various rightful claims *[ḥuqūq]* against him. His own salvation will thereby be secured, and he will be admitted into the Garden of Paradise through the mercy of Allāh (Exalted is He), whose mercy *[raḥma]* embraces all and everything, for He is the Most Merciful of the merciful *[Arḥam ar-rāḥimīn]*.

It is therefore quite pointless, in a case like this, to insist on a detailed discussion of all the crimes the penitent has ever committed. There is nothing to be gained by listing the various types of homicide, cases of wounding *[jirāḥāt]*, and acts of highway robbery *[qaṭ' aṭ-ṭarīq]*, since he will never be able to trace the victims—or their authorized representatives—in order to satisfy their claims or to seek exoneration from them. His time and energy will be far more productively spent on the course of action we have outlined above.

The same principle should be applied in cases where the penitent has been guilty of adultery and fornication *[zinā]*; of drinking intoxicating liquor *[shurb al-khamr]*; of theft *[sariqa]* from an owner whose identity is unknown to him; of highway robbery *[qaṭ' aṭ-ṭarīq]* committed against a victim whose identity is likewise unknown to him; or of unlawful contact with a woman—short of complete sexual intercourse *[dūna'l-farj]*, but sufficient to incur either the penalty *[ḥadd]* prescribed by Allāh or the discretionary punishment *[ta'zīr]* imposed by the court in less serious cases.

This statement is based on the fact that the penitent is under no obligation to prove the validity of his repentance by exposing himself to disgrace, discarding his cover, and inviting the Imām or the judge *[ḥākim]* to impose on him the legal penalties prescribed by Islāmic law *[ḥudūd]*.

Far from resorting to such inappropriate behavior, he should keep his faults modestly concealed from the eyes of his fellow creatures, by availing himself of the screen provided by Allāh (Exalted is He). Whenever the issue is one that needs to be resolved between himself and Allāh, it is only to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) that he must turn in repentance. He should therefore keep himself fully occupied with strenuous exertions of various kinds, such as fasting during the hours of daylight, cutting back on his consumption of goods that are ordinarily permissible *[mubāḥ]* and reducing his enjoyment of worldly pleasures, keeping vigil by night *[qiyām al-lail]*, reading the Qur'ān, frequently repeating the glorification *[tasbīḥ]*[204] of Allāh, and

[204] By saying: "*Subḥāna'llāh* [Glory be to Allāh]."

and never glance away from him, not even for the split second it takes for a human eye to blink:

> And yet over you there are watchers, Noble Recorders, who know whatever you do. (82:10–12) Not a word does he utter, without there being an observer at the ready by his side. (50:18)

He had obviously forgotten all about these noble guardian angels, but his heedlessness did not alter the fact that:

> He has attendant angels ranged before him and behind him, watching over him as instructed by the commandment of Allāh. (13:11)

It could not alter the fact that they are always there to record all the things that he does, even the breaths that he breathes, so that he can be called to account for them all [on the Day of Resurrection]. Needless to say, he had also forgotten about the One who knows the secret and that which is more deeply hidden still,[194] who knows the inner content of His servants' breasts,[195] and is All-Aware *[Khabīr]* of what His creatures try to conceal and what they reveal in public.[196]

Next, the penitent must check through all the entries he has made in his register of sins, noting which of them represent violations of the right *[ḥaqq]* of Allāh (Exalted is He), and of His right alone, as distinct from those which also constitute acts of wrongdoing and injustice *[maẓālim]* in the sphere of human rights. The distinction between these two categories is very important, so let us now consider each of them in turn:

1. Sins that violate the right *[ḥaqq]* of Allāh (Exalted is He).

If sins belong in this category, making amends for them is entirely a matter between the sinner and Allāh (Exalted is He). Offenses of this kind include the following:

(a) Adultery and fornication *[zinā]*.

(b) Imbibing intoxicating liquor *[shurb al-khamr]*.

(c) Listening to distracting musical entertainments *[samāʻ al-malāhī]*.

(d) Staring at a person of the opposite sex who is neither one's spouse nor a relative within the prohibited degrees of marriage *[an-naẓar ilā ghairi maḥram]*.

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[194] In the Qur'ān, Allāh says of Himself (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> He surely knows the secret and that which is yet more deeply hidden *[fa-innahu yaʻlamu 's-sirra wa akhfā]*. (20:7)

[195] Allāh is indeed Aware of the hidden content of the breasts *[inna 'llāha ʻAlīmun bi-dhāti 's-sudūr]*. (3:119)

[196] Allāh most certainly knows what they try to keep secret and what they publicly proclaim *[lā jarama anna 'llāha yaʻlamu mā yusirrūna wa mā yuʻlinūn]*. (16:23)

custodian *[waṣī]*, with whose property his own estate may well have come to be mixed up. It may be that his guardian considered this a trivial matter, and that he never thought twice about it, for the simple reason that he lacked any sense of justice and viewed his religion *[dīn]* with reckless disdain. In a case like this, the property of the minor would inevitably become entangled in the unlawfulness *[ḥarām]* of the situation, sometimes due to the behavior of the minor himself, and at other times due to the misconduct of his custodian.

Now that he is an adult, the penitent must therefore reexamine the manner in which his property was handled while he was still a minor. Then, as soon as he has completed this review, he must restore whatever is due to the rightful owners, thereby ridding his personal estate of all those dubious assets *[shubuhāt]* and cleansing it of all those elements of illegality *[ḥarām]*.

In order to ensure that his repentance is complete, the penitent must call himself to account for all the smallest details, the tiniest grains and atoms, from the day when he first committed an offense right up to and including the day of his repentance *[tawba]*. He must do this in good time, before death comes and catches him unawares, without forewarning. He must do it before the Resurrection takes him by surprise, with no opportunity for gaining any merit or setting any record straight. If he leaves it too late, he may ask, but he will hear no answer; he may feel remorse, but remorse *[nadam]* will do him no good; he may beg for a second chance, but he will not be given a second chance;[206] he may try to apologize, but his apologies will not be accepted; he may ask for a respite, but he will not be granted a respite; and he may plead for intercession, but there will be no intercession on his behalf.

This is all he can expect, since he wasted his opportunities while he was still alive; since he behaved with reckless abandon while he was in a state of wakefulness and should have had his wits about him; since he was always on the lookout for some advantage in the affairs of his daily life; since he greedily pursued the satisfaction of his carnal appetites and lustful desires; since he followed his whims and passions [*hawā*] and the promptings of his devil [*shaiṭān*]; since he recoiled from obedience to his Lord and from the honor due to Him; since he neglected to heed His call; and since he was always quick to disobey Him and to violate His commandments.

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[206] An allusion to the Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*:

> And if they ask to be regarded with favor, they are not of those to whom favor can be shown *[wa in yasta'tibū fa-mā hum mina'l-mu'tabīn]*. (41:24)

According to some traditional commentators, this means: "If they ask [their Lord] to grant them the favor of restoring them to the world, He will not do so [for He knows that, if He did restore them to the world, they would return to that which they have been forbidden to do]."

For all these reasons, his reckoning at the Resurrection will be prolonged; his wailing and his lamentation will be very loud indeed; his back will be broken; his head will be bowed; his disgrace and his shame will be very intense; his evidence and his proof will be refuted; his good deeds will be subtracted from his record; his bad deeds will be multiplied; his deals will turn sour and his bankrupt state will become apparent; the wrath of his Lord will descend upon him with great fury and seize him in its grasp; and the guardians [*zabāniya*] of the Fire of Hell will drag him off to face the torment of his Lord, which he has made ready for himself, for he has in fact caused his own ruination and brought about his own destruction. He is thus on an equal footing with as such denizens of the Fire of Hell as Qārūn and Pharaoh and Hāmān.

This warning may sound very grim indeed, but grim it needs to be, since there is no room for easygoing compromise when it comes to making amends for violations of human rights, and to ignore such offenses altogether is entirely out of the question. This is vividly described in the traditional saying [*athar*]:[207]

> [On the Day of Resurrection] the servant [of the Lord] will surely be made to stand trial in the presence of Allāh (Exalted is He). When that moment comes, his good deeds may be of such mountainous proportions that, if they were credited to him in their entirety, he would certainly be numbered among the inhabitants of the Gardens of Paradise.
>
> But the victims of wrongdoing and injustice will also be there to bring their charges against him, and he may be found guilty on a variety of counts. He may have damaged this person's reputation by libel or slander, unlawfully seized that person's property, and subjected yet another person to physical beating.
>
> His good deeds will therefore be whittled away, until he ends up with nothing at all to his credit, at which point the angels will say: "O Lord, his good deeds have all disappeared, but many claimants are still awaiting satisfaction!"
>
> The Lord will then say: "Take some of their bad deeds and throw them into the scale on top of his bad deeds, then give him a slap that will send him reeling into the Fire of Hell." Thus he will go to his doom on account of the bad deeds of others, by way of retaliation.

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[207] The term *athar* is often synonymous with *khabar* (see note [176] above). In some contexts, however, a traditional report will be classed as an *athar* if it is generally attributed to a righteous individual from the early period of Islām, but cannot be traced as far back as the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

By the same token, the victim of wrongdoing *[maẓlūm]* may be saved by a good deed originally credited to the wrongdoer *[ẓālim]*, since the latter must transfer that good deed to his victim's account in compensation for the wrong he inflicted upon him.

According to his wife ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> There are three registers *[dawāwīn]*: (1) a register *[dīwān]* of that which is forgiven by Allāh (Exalted is He); (2) a register of that which Allāh (Exalted is He) does not forgive; and (3) a register from which nothing is ever omitted. As for the register of that which Allāh (Exalted is He) does not forgive, the only item listed therein is the sin of associating partners *[shirk]* with Allāh (Glorious is His Majesty). Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:
>
> > Whoever attributes partners to Allāh, for him Allāh will surely prohibit entrance to the Garden [of Paradise], and his final abode will be the Fire [of Hell]. (5:72)
>
> As for the register of that which is forgiven by Allāh (Exalted is He), it records the wrong done by the human being to himself, in cases that are strictly between him and his Lord. And as for the register from which nothing is ever omitted, it is the list of wrongs committed by His servants against their fellow human beings.

According to a traditional report that has been handed down to us on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once asked his Companions: "Do you know which member of my Community will be the one who is bankrupt *[muflis]* on the Day of Resurrection?" To this they replied: "O Messenger of Allāh, according to our understanding, the bankrupt is someone who has neither money nor property to call his own." So the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) explained:

> The bankrupt member of my Community will be someone who brings his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* and his fasting with him on the Day of Resurrection, but who is guilty of defaming this person's reputation, of slanderously accusing this other person of sexual misconduct, of consuming the property that rightfully belonged to this third person, of shedding the blood of this fourth person, and of subjecting this fifth person to a physical beating.
>
> To each of these victims he will have to pay compensation from his stock of good deeds. If his stock of good deeds becomes exhausted, some of their sins will be taken from them and dumped on him, then he will be dumped into the Fire of Hell.

It is clearly most important for the sinner to waste no time in repenting! According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Doomed to perdition are the procrastinators *[musawwifūn]*, the people who keep saying: "We are going to repent *[sawfa natūbu]*."

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

> But the human being would rather press ahead with his wicked conduct.[208] (75:5)

According to the interpretation that has been reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), this means that the human being gives immediate priority to his sins and keeps postponing his repentance.[209] He may go on saying, "I shall repent at some point in the future," until death catches up with him, in which case he will still be on the same wicked course when he has to die.

Luqmān the Wise *[al-Ḥakīm]* said to his son: "O my dear son, do not put off repentance till tomorrow, for death may come and catch you by surprise."

It is therefore necessary for each and everyone to repent when morning breaks and again when the day is done. To quote the saying of Mujāhid[210] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "If someone does not repent in the morning and then again when evening comes, he must be counted as one of the wrongdoers."

As we have indicated earlier on in this discourse, repentance must be considered from two different points of view.[211] One has to do with the penitent's duty toward his fellow human beings *[ḥaqq al-'ibād]*, and this is the aspect we have just been discussing. The second has to do with cases where repentance is strictly between you and Allāh (Exalted is He).

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[208] The translation given here has been chosen—from among several possible versions—in order to reflect the particular interpretation cited by the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[209] According to some other traditional commentaries, however, this verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān should be understood to mean: "But the human being prefers to disbelieve in that which is before him [namely the Resurrection, with the reckoning and retribution that must then be faced]." (This interpretation is reflected in Pickthall's translation: "But man would fain deny what is before him.")

[210] Abu 'l-Ḥajjāj Mujāhid ibn Jabr al-Makkī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a *tābi'ī* [member of the generation following that of the Companions] and a disciple of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father). By the time of his death in A.H. 104, he had come to be regarded as one of the most outstanding scholars in the fields of Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]* and Qur'ānic exegesis *[tafsīr]*.

[211] See pp. 139 and 143 above.

As viewed from this second perspective, repentance is a matter of pleading with the tongue for forgiveness from Allāh (Exalted is He), feeling remorse *[nadam]* in the heart, and conceiving a profound determination never to repeat the acts of sinful disobedience committed against Him in the past.

In the case we are now considering, the penitent must exert himself to even greater lengths, since he needs to make amends for wrongdoing *[zulm]* by which the rights of his fellow human beings were violated. He must make every conceivable effort to perform as many good deeds as he possibly can, in order to equip himself for the retaliation that will be inflicted upon him on the Day of Resurrection, for his good deeds will then be taken from him and placed in the scales of his victims. He must strive to ensure that his good deeds are at least equal in number to the acts of wrongdoing he has committed against his fellow human beings, otherwise he will be doomed to perdition because of the bad deeds of other people [from whom they will be taken and charged to his account].

This calls for nothing less than a total, lifelong commitment to the performance of good works, assuming that the time he has left to live is as long as the period spent in wrongdoing. But what if death has set an ambush for him? Perhaps his appointed hour *[ajal]* is near at hand, so that the fatal decree *[maniyya]* could easily snatch him away before the achievement of the aspiration *[umniyya]*, or even before the sincere commitment to the task, the formulation of a genuine intention *[tashih an-niyya]*, and the first step toward purification *[tasfiyat al-luqma]*.[212] The penitent must therefore set to work without a moment's delay. In order to maximize his effort, he should make written notes of all that he has to attend to, listing the names of his victims one by one. Then he must embark on a tour that may take him through all the four quarters of the globe, through the regions and districts of all the various countries. He must seek out all his victims, and then, whenever he finds them alive, he must either ask for [and obtain] a waiver from them or else satisfy their claims in full. If he cannot find his actual victims, he must approach their legal heirs *[waratha]* and settle accounts with them.

In the course of this whole operation, the penitent must be in constant fear of Allāh's punishment, in constant hope of His mercy, careful to refrain from everything of which his Master *[Mawlā]* would disapprove, vigorous in his efforts to obey Him and to earn His good pleasure. Then, if his predestined moment of death should overtake him while he is in this state, his reward will be incumbent upon Allāh, for as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

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[212] Literally, "the purification of the mouthful/morsel." The significance of this idiomatic expression is that a reformed way of life would have to begin with conversion to a pure diet, free from the slightest morsel of unlawful food.

> And if someone goes away from his home, as one who is emigrating to Allāh and His Messenger, and then death overtakes him, his reward will be incumbent on Allāh. (4:100)

The following story is recorded in the collection known as the *Ṣaḥīḥ* as a tradition unanimously accepted as authentic *[muttafaq 'alaih]*. It has been handed down to us on the authority of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī[213] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), according to whom the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> In the days of your pre-Islāmic ancestors, there lived a man who had murdered no fewer than ninety-nine victims. He eventually felt the pangs of remorse, so he asked if anyone could tell him where he might find the most learned man in all the world. A certain monk *[rāhib]* was pointed out as fitting this description, so he approached him, confessed to him that he had murdered ninety-nine victims, and asked him whether there was any possibility of repentance being accepted in his case. "No," said the monk, so he killed him on the spot, thereby rounding his total up to one hundred.
>
> The murderer then renewed his inquiries. The person pointed out to him this time, as the most learned in the world, was a man of practical wisdom *['āmil]*. So he approached him, confessed to him that he had murdered one hundred victims, and asked him whether there was any possibility of repentance being accepted in his case.
>
> "Yes," came the reply, "but you must avoid the company of those who stand as an obstacle between you and repentance. You must move far away, to the land I shall indicate to you, for in it there are people who worship Allāh. You must worship Allāh together with them, and never return to your own country, for it is the land of evil."
>
> The murderer set off toward the destination recommended by the man of practical wisdom, but he had barely covered half the distance along his path when death came upon him. As soon as this happened, the angels of mercy *[malā'ikat ar-raḥma]* and the angels of punishment *[malā'ikat al-'adhāb]* began to argue over him. In support of their claim to his soul, the angels of mercy said: "He came here as a penitent, on his way to meet Allāh!" But the angels of punishment objected, saying: "He never did any good at all!"
>
> At this point they were joined by another angel, this one in the shape of a human being *[ādamī]*, so they agreed to appoint him as an arbitrator. Having

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[213] See note 120 above.

> heard both sides of the argument, he said: "Measure the distance between this spot and each of the two countries [the one he had left behind and the one he was traveling toward]. Then treat him as belonging to whichever land is the closer of the two." They proceeded to measure the distance in either direction, and discovered that he was closer to the land he had been aiming to reach, so the angels of mercy bore him away with them.

In another traditionally accepted version *[riwāya]* of this story, the conclusion is slightly different, namely:

> It turned out that he was nearer to the righteous township by a single inch, so he was counted as one of its inhabitants.

There is yet another traditionally accepted version, in which the story ends as follows:

> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) sent forth instructions by way of inspiration, ordering the country of the wicked to move further away, and commanding the country of the righteous to move closer to the spot. It was also He who told the angels: "Measure the two distances and see how they compare," and so they discovered that the spot where the body of the penitent lay was closer to the country of the righteous by a single inch, for He had indeed forgiven him.

This story provides us with clear evidence that the sinner is bound to gain by setting his sights on repentance and taking steps toward it, and that his intention *[niyya]* to repent is sure to stand him in good stead [even if he dies before he has time to accomplish it fully]. The story also serves to prove the point that there can be no salvation for anyone [on the Day of Resurrection] unless the balance shows an ultimate preponderance of good deeds in his favor, if only by the weight of a single speck of dust. It is therefore essential for the penitent to amass as many good deeds as possible, so that he can use them to compensate the plaintiffs on the Day of Resurrection. It is also vitally important for him to perform as many supererogatory acts of worship *[nawāfil]* as he possibly can, since these will be needed to patch the holes in his obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]*. As the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> Perform as many supererogatory acts of worship *[nawāfil]* as you can, for these will serve to patch up the obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]*.[214]

The penitent must enter into a valid and strictly binding contract with Allāh (Exalted is He), making a reliable commitment to the effect from the Fire of Hell and I will cause him to enter the Garden of Paradise. It must therefore be pronounced as the preface to your recitation of the Scriptures, and as the introduction to your performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, for if anyone should die in the course of a recitation or prayer begun with these words, [the pair of angels called] Munkar and Nakīr will not subject him to their usual post-mortem interrogation, the agonies of death *[sakarāt al-mawt]* and the crushing pressure of the grave will be alleviated in his case, and My mercy *[raḥma]* will be upon him. I shall allow him to have plenty of space inside his grave. I shall give him plenty of light within his grave. I shall let him have light therein to the full extent of his faculty of sight.

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[214] **Author's note:** This may be a slightly paraphrased version of the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), rather than a strict quotation.

"'When I bring him forth from his grave [on the Day of Resurrection], it will be with his body perfectly clean and his face most radiant, shining with a brilliant glow. When I call him to account, I shall make it an easy reckoning for him to pass, and I shall tip the scale of the balance in his favor. I shall provide him with perfect illumination on the Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]*, so that he can cross over safely and enter the Garden of Paradise. I shall also command the herald to announce him, when he is ushered onto the Fields of the Resurrection *['Araṣāt al-Qiyāma]*, as one who is worthy of bliss and forgiveness.'

"Jesus (peace be upon him) then responded with the question: 'O Allāh! O my Lord! Can this be specially for me?' So the Lord told him: 'For you in particular, as well as for those who follow you, who conduct themselves in keeping with your example, and who speak as you speak. It is also for Aḥmad and his Community *[Umma]*, after you.'

"Jesus (peace be upon him) conveyed this news to his followers, to whom he said:

> I am also bringing good tidings of a Messenger who shall come after me, whose name shall be Aḥmad [Praiseworthy]. (61:6)[113]

"When he had explained to them that the name Aḥmad [Praiseworthy] would be in keeping with the excellence of his nature, his character, his refinement, and so on and so forth, Jesus (peace be upon him) accepted from his followers their solemn covenant to believe in this coming Messenger. Later, when Allāh (Exalted is He) raised him up to heaven, he reemphasized the importance of this covenant to his companions. In the course of time, however, when all the Disciples and all the other

the way, a director *[murshid]* to give him directions, a pilot *[hādī]* to keep him on course, and a leader *[qā'id]* to set an example for him to follow.

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[113] *wa mubashshiran bi-Rasūlin ya'tī min ba'di'smuhu Aḥmad.*

At every stage of his progress, the penitent must prove by his actions that he is truly capable of honesty *[ṣidq]*, sincerity *[ikhlāṣ]*, and serious dedication to the cause for which he is supposed to be striving *[jidd fi'l-mujāhada]*.

Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

> As for those who strive in Our cause, surely We shall guide them to Our paths. (29:69)

This means that He has guaranteed right guidance *[hidāya]* to anyone who is genuinely and earnestly committed to following His path. As long as the penitent is true to that commitment, we can therefore say for certain that he will never be deprived of guidance, because Allāh does not fail to keep His promise,[216] and He is never tyrannical toward His servants.[217] He is in fact the Most Merciful of the merciful *[Arḥamu'r-rāḥimīn]*, Kind and Compassionate *[Ra'ūfun Raḥīm]*, Gentle *[Laṭīf]* and Beneficent *[Bārr]* toward His creatures. He is Helpful *[Mu'īn]* and Supportive *[Muwaffiq]* in dealing with those who seek to approach Him. As for those who turn their backs and move away from Him, He invites them with gentle kindness to return. The delight He takes in their repentance *[tauba]* is like the joy experienced by a tenderhearted mother, when her son comes home at long last from a journey to faraway places.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> Great indeed is the delight that Allāh takes in the repentance *[tauba]* of any one of you. It is even greater than the happiness felt by a man at the outcome of the following experience:
>
> The man is traveling across a stretch of country fraught with pestilence and deadly peril, accompanied by a camel that is laden with his supplies of food and drink and everything else that he needs in order to survive the journey. But somehow he lets the camel go astray, so he searches for it high and low, until he is on the verge of giving up the ghost.
>
> At this point he says to himself: "I may as well go back to the spot where I first noticed that my camel had wandered off. That is where I shall die." No sooner

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[216] Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

> Allāh does not fail to keep the tryst *[inna'llāha lā yukhlifu'l-mī'ād]*. (3:9 and 13:31)

[217] An allusion to several verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān, including:

> And [you must know] that Allāh is never tyrannical toward His servants *[wa anna'llāha laisa bi-ẓallāmin li'l-'abīd]*. (8:51)

> has he found his way back to the place, however, than a fit of drowsiness overwhelms him. He closes his eyes for one brief moment, but then he is suddenly wide-awake once more—and lo and behold, his camel is right there beside him, still laden with all his supplies of food and drink!

ʿAlī (may Allāh ennoble his countenance) said that he heard from the ever-truthful Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had said:

> In no case will it ever happen that a servant [of Allāh] commits a sin, but then gets up and washes himself clean *[tawaddaʾa]*, performs the ritual prayer *[sallā]*, and begs Allāh to forgive his sin, without it being incumbent upon Allāh to forgive him.

In His own words (Glorious and Exalted is He):

> And whenever someone does something evil, or wrongs himself, then begs forgiveness of Allāh, he will find that Allāh is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate. (4:110)

If it happens to be a simple matter for the penitent to sort out the assets in his possession that have been wrongfully acquired *[maghṣūba]*, his next step will depend on whether or not the identity of the rightful owner can be ascertained. Whenever such identification is possible, he must make immediate restitution to the rightful owner in person, or else to his legal heirs *[waratha]*, as explained in an earlier passage.[218] If the identity of the rightful owner is unknown, on the other hand, the penitent is obliged to dispose of the assets in the form of charitable donations made on behalf of the person concerned.

It may not be so easy, however, to sort out the unlawful element *[ḥarām]* from that which is lawful *[ḥalāl]*. For example, the wrongfully acquired property may have been woven into an otherwise lawful inheritance. In a case like this, the penitent must take careful stock of the situation. Once he has made a serious effort to quantify the unlawful element, and has distributed the amount concerned for the benefit of charitable causes, he is entitled to keep the remainder for himself and his dependents.

(c) What the penitent must do in order to make amends for offenses against the honor and good repute of his fellow human beings.

As far as people's reputations *[aʿrāḍ]* are concerned, the damage is sometimes done by making defamatory remarks *[sabb]* and casting aspersions *[shatm]* directly in their faces. In cases like this, the transgression is committed against the hearts of the victims. The same kind of damage may also be done by slandering people in their absence, by speaking ill of them and saying unkind things about them when their backs are turned. To be guilty of backbiting *[ghība]* is to talk about someone in his absence *[ghaiba]*, saying things he would not like to have said to his face.

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[218] See p. 152 above.

For the penitent who has slandered a certain individual behind his back *[ightābahu]*,[219] atonement can be a simple matter of confessing to the victim and asking him to pardon the offense. If he has slandered a whole group of people, however, he must seek out all the members of that group and approach them one by one. He may discover in the process that some of his victims have already died, in which case he will have to make amends by performing many good deeds, as we have previously explained.[220]

All of these statements are relevant if—and only if—the victims are actually aware that the backbiting has taken place. If it has not come to their notice, the penitent is not obliged to seek their pardon for the offense. More than that, it is not permissible for him to do so, because he would only be causing unnecessary pain to their hearts. Instead of confessing to his unwitting victims, he must approach the people in whose presence he uttered the slanderous remarks, denounce himself to them as having been a liar at the time, and then speak approvingly about those whom he had formerly slandered.

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[219] Like the noun *ghība* [backbiting], the Arabic verb *ightāba* [to slander someone] is derived from *gh-y-b*, the triliteral root of which "invisibility" is the primary signification.

[220] See p. 152 above.

On the importance of disclosing to one's victim the full extent of each offense committed against him.

It is strictly necessary for the penitent to acquaint his victim with the full extent of each offense he has committed against him, and he must not give him an ambiguous description of any of the wrongs to which he is confessing. A vaguely worded plea for absolution *[istihlāl]* is not sufficient in such cases, because it is always possible that the injured party *[mazlūm]*, if he came to know all the facts concerning the extent of his injury, would not feel disposed to waive his right to exact retribution. He might prefer to postpone that retribution to the Day of Resurrection, in order to receive his compensation by having good deeds transferred to his account from that of his malefactor, or by having some of his own bad deeds transferred to the debit scale of the latter.

This rule does not apply, however, if the victim would suffer further injury from the knowledge of every specific item in the whole catalog of offenses against him. For instance, the offender would only add to the harm he had already caused, if he told his victim that he was guilty of sexual misconduct *[zinā]* with his maidservant or his wife, or that he had spread rumors about some hidden defect in his character. In cases like this, the penitent has no alternative but to couch his plea for absolution in rather vague terms. Even if he succeeds in obtaining the pardon he seeks, he will still be in debt to his victim because of a certain element of unrequited wrong, so he must repair that wrong by performing good deeds, just as he would have to repair the wrong if his victim happened to be dead or otherwise absent beyond his reach.

When a person is actually a victim, but he is unaware that an offense has been perpetrated against him, and he only learns of it when the remorseful offender approaches him with a confession, he can hardly be expected to feel an immediate urge to grant an unqualified pardon *[iḥlāl]*! The initial instinct of the injured party is bound to be the feeling that he should insist on receiving full compensation. The offender must therefore be prepared to adopt the only right and sensible approach, which is to treat his victim with every courtesy and kindness, doing his utmost to further his interests and help him achieve his goals. With all the affection and sympathy he manifests toward him in the process, he may eventually win his heart over, for, as the saying goes, the human being takes kindly to kindness *[al-insān ʿabd al-iḥsān]*.[221] Just as surely as you can alienate people by treating them badly, you can win them back by treating them well.

If this is unfortunately beyond his capacity, the only form of expiation *[kaffāra]* left to the penitent will be the performance of many good deeds, with which to pay compensation on the Day of Resurrection to the victim of his criminal behavior. When that Day comes, Allāh (Exalted is He) will render judgment against him and in favor of his victim. Having given this verdict, He will make it obligatory for the victim to accept those good deeds from the offender as compensation for the offense committed against him, even if he happens to be reluctant to accept them. This is the same principle of justice that would be applied in an Islāmic court here in this world, if a person had damaged or destroyed an article of property belonging to another, and then offered its equivalent by way of compensation, only to hear the injured party reject this offer of restitution and refuse to release him from any further liability. In settling such a case, the judge would issue an order requiring the plaintiff to accept the compensation offered, whether he wished to do so or not. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will deliver the very same ruling in the courtyards of the Resurrection *[ʿaraṣāt al-Qiyāma]*, for He is the Fairest of all judges *[Aḥkam al-ḥākimīn]* and the Justest of the just *[Aʿdal al-ʿādilīn]*.

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[221] Literally, "the human being is the slave [or servant] of beneficent treatment."

Concerning the pious restraint [*wara‘*] which must be observed by the penitent in every aspect of his future conduct.

Once he has acquitted himself of all liability for offenses committed against his fellow human beings, and has become free to devote himself exclusively to the worshipful service of Allāh (Exalted is He), the penitent must stick to the path of pious restraint [*wara‘*]. This is the path that a servant [of Allāh] must follow in order to avoid incurring obligations to his fellow servants, in this world and the hereafter, and to avoid incurring the punishment of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). This is the path he must follow in order to be relieved of the reckoning [*hisāb*] he would otherwise have to undergo on the Day of Resurrection, because the reckoning on the Day of Resurrection will be about the rights and dues of human beings [*huqūq al-‘ibād*], and about all the transactions that have taken place between human beings in this world without regard for the sacred law [*shar‘*].

Let us consider the case of a person who always holds himself accountable here in this world, who takes from his fellow creatures only that to which he has a rightful claim, who abstains from that which does not belong to him, and who dreads the prospect of a lengthy reckoning at the Resurrection. What will he need to account for [on that Day]? According to the traditional report [*khabar*]:[222]

> Allāh (Exalted is He) will regard it as unworthy of Him to subject those who practice pious restraint [*al-wari‘īn*] to reckoning at the Resurrection.

This is why the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> Call yourselves to account before you are called to account, and weigh your own selves before they are weighed.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Part of the excellence of a man's Islām is paying no attention to that which does not concern him.

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[222] See note [176] above.

This gives us a clear indication of how important it is to proceed with the utmost caution in everything we undertake, and to refrain from embarking on any course of action without the permission of the sacred law *[shar']*. If a person can find enough evidence in the sacred law to justify the action he is contemplating, he may go ahead and do what he proposes. If not, he should hold back and wait till he sees a better alternative. In other words, he should follow the advice of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Leave whatever causes you to feel misgivings, in favor of that which does not make you feel misgivings.[311]

The following sayings of his (Allāh bless him and give him peace) are also highly relevant in this context:

> The believer is one who takes a stand on principle, while the hypocrite is a hasty opportunist.[312]
>
> Even if you went on performing the ritual prayer until you came to be permanently curved like bows *[hanāyā]*, and kept on fasting until you were as thin as bowstrings *[awtār]*, nothing would do you any good except a healthy dose of pious restraint *[wara']*.
>
> The true believer is a very thorough investigator *[al-mu'min fattāsh]*.
>
> If someone does not care about the source of his food and drink, Allāh (Exalted is He) will not care by which gate He causes him to enter the Fire of Hell.

According to a report transmitted on the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father),[223] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> O people, not one of you will die until he has received his full quota of worldly provisions *[rizq]*, so do not be in a hurry to obtain those provisions. Observe your duty to Allāh, and behave with decency as you go about your search. Take only what is lawful for you, and leave what has been declared unlawful for you.

According to another traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd[224] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If the servant [of Allāh] has acquired a certain amount of wealth by unlawful means, he cannot expect to be rewarded for giving some of it away as alms, nor to receive a blessing for spending some of it on charitable causes. He may try to leave it behind him as a legacy [when he dies], but it will go along with him in the form of provisions for his journey to the Fire of Hell.

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[223] Abū 'Abdi'llāh Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh al-Ansārī was a Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), from whom he transmitted a very considerable number of traditions *[hadīth]*. He died at Medina between A.H. 68 and 78.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Allāh does not use evil to wipe out evil, but He does wipe out evil with goodness.

According to yet another traditional report, transmitted on the authority of 'Imrān ibn al-Ḥuṣain[225] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> Allāh (Exalted is He) says: "My servant, fulfill the religious obligations I have imposed upon you, and you will be numbered among the most worshipful of all the people in the world. Avoid doing anything that I have forbidden you to do, and you will be numbered among the most pious of all the people in the world. Be well satisfied with the sustenance I have provided for you, and you will be numbered among the richest of all the people in the world."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to Abū Huraira[226] (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> Practice pious restraint *[kun wari'an]* and you will be numbered among the most worshipful of all the people in the world.

It was al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī[227] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "The weight of one tiny atom of pious restraint *[wara']* is better than a thousand measures of fasting and ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*."

Allāh (Exalted is He) conveyed *[awḥā]* to Moses (peace be upon him) by way of inspiration:

> For those who seek to draw close, there is nothing to compare with pious restraint as a means of drawing close to Me.

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[224] Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd al-Hudhalī (d. A.H. 32 or 33). One of the earliest and closest Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). A man of lowly antecedents, he became an authority on the recitation and interpretation of the Qur'ān, as well as an expert on Islamic law and the Prophetic tradition.

[225] Abū Najīd 'Imrān ibn al-Ḥuṣain ibn 'Ubaid ibn Khalaf al-Khuzā'ī al-Ka'bī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) embraced Islām in A.H. 7, the year of the expedition to Khaibar. He fought at the side of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) during several later expeditions.

The Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) sent him to Basra to provide the people of that city with instruction in the science of Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]*, and he made such a favorable impression that Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn said of him: "Of all the Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), never did we in Basra see any who could surpass the excellence of 'Imrān ibn al-Ḥuṣain." He died in Basra in A.H. 52, leaving numerous descendants in that city.

[226] Abū Huraira ["Father of a Kitten"] is a nickname he acquired on account of his fondness for a little cat. His real name is uncertain, although some call him Abū Huraira ad-Dawsī al-Yamānī. He is famous for having related more traditions than any other Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). Having embraced Islām A.H. 7, the year of the expedition to Khaibar, he joined the special group of materially impoverished Muslims known as the Companions of the Bench *[Aṣḥāb aṣ-Ṣuffa]*. He died in Medina in A.H. 57 or 59, at the age of 78.

[227] Al-Ḥasan ibn Abi 'l-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī is revered as one of the greatest saints of early Islām. Born in Medina in A.H. 21/642 C.E., he was brought up in Basra, where he met many Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace.) He died in A.H. 110/728 C.E.

There is a saying to the effect that the act of repaying one *dānaq* [small coin][228] of silver is more meritorious in the sight of Allāh than six hundred pilgrimages, all of them blessed with acceptance *[ḥujja mabrūra]*. (According to another version: "than seventy pilgrimages, all of them worthy of acceptance.")

In the words of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "Tomorrow [in the life hereafter], those who sit at ease in the company of Allāh (Exalted is He) will be those who have practiced pious restraint and abstinence *[ahl al-waraʿ wa'z-zuhd]*."

It was Ibn al-Mubārak[229] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "To decline the unlawful offer of a single penny *[fals]*[230] is more meritorious in the sight of Allāh than donating one hundred pennies to charitable causes."

The following story is told about Ibn al-Mubārak: He once spent some time in Syria, for the purpose of making a written record of the traditions *[ḥadīth]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). While he was engaged in this activity, the pen he was using happened to break, so he borrowed another pen from one of the local residents. Then, when he had finished writing, he absentmindedly slipped the pen into his own pen case.

It was not till much later, by which time he had already returned to his home in Merv, that Ibn al-Mubārak set eyes on that pen again. He recognized it as the one he had borrowed, so he immediately set about making preparations for another long trip to Syria, for the sole purpose of giving the pen back to its owner.

According to traditional reports, an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr[231] (may

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[228] The *dānaq* was valued at one sixth of a dirham.

[229] Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ʿAbdu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak al-Ḥanẓalī al-Marwazī was born in A.H. 118/736 C.E. The son of a Turkish father and a Persian mother, he studied under many teachers in Merv and elsewhere, and became erudite in many branches of learning, including grammar and literature. Although he was a wealthy merchant, he was renowned for the ascetic quality of his personal lifestyle, and he distributed much of his wealth in alms to the poor. Of his many learned works on the traditions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the one that has survived is devoted to the theme of asceticism.

[230] The *fals* (pronounced *fils* in colloquial Arabic) is a small copper coin.

[231] Abū ʿAbd'illāh an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr ibn Saʿd al-Khazrajī (d. A.H. 74). After having served as governor of Kūfa and Ḥims, under the Umayyad Caliph Yazīd, he joined the revolt of ʿAbd'ullāh ibn az-Zubair and was killed.

Allāh be well pleased with him) used to say: "I heard these words from Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> That which is lawful [*halāl*] is clearly defined, and that which is unlawful [*harām*] is likewise clearly defined. Between the two there are matters of ambiguity [*mushtabihāt*], and not many people are adequately informed about these. In order to keep his religion [*dīn*] and his honor intact, a person must therefore be extremely wary of things that are of dubious legality [*shubuhāt*].
>
> When someone fails to exercise the utmost caution in approaching things that are merely dubious, he is liable to stumble into something that is strictly unlawful. Just like the shepherd who pastures his flock around the perimeter of the forbidden zone, he is always on the verge of trespassing inside it. Every king maintains a forbidden zone [*himā*], and Allāh's forbidden zone is the area that contains His inviolable sanctuaries [*mahārim*].
>
> And what about the human body? Does it not contain a peculiar lump of flesh [*mudgha*], peculiar because the whole body is sound when it is sound, and because the whole body is unsound when it is unsound? Yes indeed, that lump of flesh is the heart!"

Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī[232] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "Everything has a defining statute [*hadd*], and the defining statutes [*hudūd*] of Islām are pious restraint [*wara'*], modest humility [*tawādu'*], patience [*sabr*] and thankfulness [*shukr*]. Pious restraint is the essential mainstay [*malāk/milāk*] of all human affairs, while patience is the means of salvation from the Fire of Hell, and thankfulness is the passport to the Garden of Paradise."

Upon entering the city of Mecca, al-Ḥasan al-Basrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) noticed that a young man, one of the sons of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), was resting his back against the Ka'ba while preaching to the people. Al-Ḥasan went up to him and asked: "What is the essential mainstay of religion [*dīn*]?" "Pious restraint [*wara'*]," said the young preacher, to whom he then put the question: "What is the ruin of religion?" To this he received the answer: "Greedy ambition [*tama'*]." Al-Ḥasan was quite amazed to hear such words of wisdom from one so young.

Ibrāhīm ibn Ad'ham[233] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) had this to say on the subject: "Pious restraint comes in two varieties *[al-wara' wara'ān]*: One form of pious restraint is an obligatory religious duty *[farḍ]*, while the other form of pious restraint is a measure of precaution *[ḥidhr]*. As an obligatory religious duty, pious restraint means abstaining from acts of outright disobedience against Allāh. As a measure of precaution, on the other hand, pious restraint means abstaining from things that are of dubious legality *[shubuhāt]*, just in case they are actually covered by the prohibitions of Allāh (Exalted is He)."

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[232] Abū Mūsā 'Abd'ullāh ibn Qais ibn Sulaimān al-Ash'arī (d. ca. A.H. 42) was a Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who served as a general in many of the battles fought in the early days of Islām. In A.H. 37, he was appointed as an arbitrator to represent 'Alī (may Allāh ennoble his countenance) at the Battle of Ṣiffīn. He was also a distinguished Qur'ānic scholar.

[233] Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm ibn Ad'ham ibn Manṣūr ibn Yazīd ibn Jābir at-Tamīmī al-'Ijlī was born in Balkh of pure Arab descent. His life has often been compared to that of Buddha, since he is described in legend as the Prince of Balkh who renounced his kingdom and wandered westward to live a life of complete asceticism, earning his bread in Syria by honest manual labor until his death ca. A.H. 165/782 C.E.

As far as ordinary people are concerned, pious restraint must therefore be a matter of abstinence not only from that which is definitely unlawful *[ḥarām]*, but also from that which is of dubious legality *[shubha]*. In other words, it requires the average person to abstain from anything by which he might incur some liability toward his fellow creatures, as well as from anything that would render him subject to a penalty prescribed by the sacred law *[shar']*.

As practiced by the élite *[khāṣṣ]*, pious restraint must also include abstinence from everything that is influenced by the passions, or motivated by the lower self *[nafs]* in its pursuit of carnal desires and worldly pleasures.

In the case of the élite of the élite *[khāṣṣ al-khāṣṣ]*, pious restraint must extend even further, to include abstinence from anything in which there is any trace of self-will *[irāda]* or ulterior motive *[ru'ya]*.

It can therefore be said that an ordinary person is exercising pious restraint *[yatawarra'u]* by giving up his attachment to this world, that a member of the élite is exercising pious restraint by giving up his attachment to the Garden of Paradise, and that a member of the élite of the élite is exercising pious restraint by giving up his attachment to everything apart from the One who has created and made [whatever exists in the entire universe].

According to Yaḥyā ibn Mu'ādh ar-Rāzī[234] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "There are two ways of looking at pious restraint *[wara']*: From the external point of view *[ẓāhir]*, it means that you do not make the slightest movement except for the sake of Allāh.

From the perspective of the inner being *[bāṭin]*, it means that nothing apart from Him (Blessed and Exalted is He) is allowed to enter your heart."

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[234] Abū Zakariyā' Yaḥyā ibn Mu'ādh ar-Rāzī was a disciple of Ibn Karrām. After leaving his native town of Rayy, he lived for a time in Balkh, then moved to Nīshāpūr where he died in A.H. 258/871 C.E.

Yaḥyā (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) also said: "If a person fails to pay attention to the subtle aspect of pious restraint, he will gain nothing from it, and he will not attain to the splendid gift he would otherwise receive."

It is the positive side of this equation that is emphasized in the saying: "If someone does pay meticulous attention to pious restraint, his status at the Resurrection will be glorious indeed!"

To quote yet another anonymous saying: "Pious restraint *[wara']* is much more difficult in relation to the faculty of speech than in relation to gold and silver. It is also true that voluntary detachment *[zuhd]* from political leadership is much more difficult than voluntary detachment from gold and silver, because you are willing to sacrifice these precious metals in pursuit of political leadership."

It was Abū Sulaimān ad-Dārānī[235] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Pious restraint *[wara']* is the first stage of voluntary detachment *[zuhd]*, just as frugal satisfaction *[qanā'a]* is the first stage of contentment *[riḍā]*."

Abū 'Uthmān[236] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once remarked: "The spiritual reward for pious restraint is the lightness of the reckoning [to be experienced at the Resurrection]."

We have already quoted one of the sayings of Yaḥyā ibn Mu'ādh ar-Rāzī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who also said: "Pious restraint is exercised by pausing at the boundary of knowledge *['ilm]*, without crossing over into fanciful interpretation *[ta'wīl]*."

According to a man of good repute (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "If a person does not have pious restraint to keep him company while he is in a state of poverty, it is a foregone conclusion that he will consume unlawful food *[ḥarām]*."

Yūnus ibn 'Ubaidi'llāh[237] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him)

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[235] Abū Sulaimān 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Aṭiyya ad-Dārānī (d. A.H. 205 or 215). A pious devotee whose inclination lay toward extreme asceticism. He is renowned for his many memorable sayings.

[236] Abū 'Uthmān Sa'īd ibn Ismā'īl al-Ḥīrī an-Nīsābūrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was one of the early Shaikhs of Khurāsān. He came originally from Rayy, where he knew Yaḥyā ibn Mu'ādh ar-Rāzī and Shāh ibn Shujā' al-Kirmānī. After moving to Nishapur he came under the influence of Abū Ḥafṣ al-Ḥaddād. He visited al-Junaid in Baghdād, and died at Nishapur in A.H. 298/911 C.E. "Even in the days of my childhood," he once said, "my heart was always seeking after something of reality. I was always convinced … that the Islāmic way of life held mysteries other than its external manifestations."

[237] Abū 'Abdi'llāh Yūnus ibn 'Ubaidi'llāh ibn Dīnār al-'Abdī al-Baṣrī (d. A.H. 139) was an expert in the traditions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and a disciple of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

[wārith]. If it resulted in less than fatal injury, on the other hand, he must hold that discussion with his victim in person. Perhaps the parties concerned will be disposed to waive their right to exact retaliation, in which case, if they simply decide to grant him an outright pardon *['afw]*, the case will be closed without further ado. If they offer him a pardon in exchange for a financial consideration, he will have acquitted himself of his liability as soon as he has paid them the stipulated amount.

In a case of intentional homicide where the identity of the murderer has hitherto been unknown to anyone but himself, the penitent killer is obliged to confess his guilt to the *walī ad-dam* [the guardian of the blood, i.e., the relative of the victim who is entitled to exact retaliation], and he must be prepared to let this person be the judge as to whether he should live or die. The *walī ad-dam* may then grant him an unconditional pardon, if he wishes to do so, or he may kill him, if he chooses to go to the other extreme, or he may prefer to take the middle course and accept a financial compensation from him in exchange for a pardon. It is not permissible, in a case like this, for the penitent killer to keep his identity concealed, because repentance in the abstract *[mujarrad at-tawba]* is not enough to relieve him of the burden of guilt.

A different approach is called for, however, if the penitent has killed a multitude of victims at various times and in widely scattered places, especially if it all happened long ago, so that he does not even know exactly how many people he has killed—let alone who their executors *[awliyā']* might be. In a case like this, the penitent must make sure that his repentance is as good as it could possibly be, and that his conduct is correspondingly improved. He must impose upon his own lower self *[nafs]* the legal penalty *[hadd]* prescribed by Allāh, by subjecting it to a variety of strenuous exertions and punishing tasks. He must extend forgiveness to those who treat him unjustly and do him harm. He must pay for the emancipation of slaves. He must make financial contributions to charitable causes. He must perform many supererogatory acts of worship *[nawāfil]*. He must do all these good deeds so that, on the Day of Resurrection, he will be able to distribute among his victims the spiritual reward he has earned in the process, giving them all their shares in proportion to their various rightful claims *[huqūq]* against him. His own salvation will thereby be secured, and he will be admitted into

We should also remember his words (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Leave whatever causes you to feel misgivings, in favor of that which does not make you feel misgivings *[daʿ mā yurībuka ilā mā lā yurībuk]*.[242]

Maʿrūf al-Karkhī[243] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was recommending pious restraint *[waraʿ]* when he said: "You must keep your tongue from expressing praise [of your fellow creatures], just as you would keep it from expressing blame."

According to Bishr ibn al-Ḥārith [al-Ḥāfī][244] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "The hardest things to practice are three, namely, generosity *[jūd]* in the midst of scarcity, pious restraint *[waraʿ]* in one's private life, and speaking the truth *[kalimat al-haqq]* in the presence of someone who is regarded with a mixture of fear and hope."

The following story is told about the sister of Bishr ibn al-Ḥārith al-Ḥāfī, and how she once came seeking the advice of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon all three of them): "O Imām," she said, "when we work at our spinning [after dark], we sit out on our roof terrace, so that we can see by the beams of light that shine from the lanterns in the neighborhood outside. Is it permissible for us to do our spinning by their beams of light?" On hearing this, the Imām exclaimed: "Who are you? May Allāh pardon and protect you!" When she said: "I am the sister of Bishr ibn al-Ḥārith," Imām Aḥmad (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) immediately burst into tears. "Pious restraint is sadly making its departure from your household," he said with a sigh, then he answered her question by telling her: "You must not work at your spinning by the light of their lanterns!"

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[242] This saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was quoted earlier in this Discourse (see p. 162 above).

[243] Abū Maḥfūẓ Maʿrūf ibn Fīrūz al-Karkhī (d. A.H. 200/815 C.E.) is said to have been born to Christian parents. After his conversion to Islām, he acquired a saintly reputation as a teacher in Baghdād, noted for his emphasis on the spiritual content of the religion, and especially for his personal generosity and sincere devotion. One of his pupils was Sarī as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who became in turn the teacher of al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

[244] Abū Naṣr Bishr ibn al-Ḥārith al-Ḥāfī ["the Barefoot"] was born near Merv ca. A.H. 150/767 C.E. After an early life of wanton dissipation, he settled in Baghdād and became a serious student of the traditions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), but then abandoned formal learning for the life of a wandering beggar. Destitute, starving and barefoot, he acquired the nickname al-Ḥāfī, yet he won the admiration of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and the respect of the Caliph al-Maʾmūn. He died in Baghdād in A.H. 227/841 C.E. May Allāh bestow His mercy upon him.

Concerning the special merit of "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*."

From a traditional report that has been transmitted on the authority of 'Aṭā', we learn that Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said:

"When the expression 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*' was first sent down [by divine revelation to mankind], the clouds fled away to the East, the winds died down, the waves of the ocean heaved in a tempestuous storm, the beasts pricked up their ears to listen, the devils *[shayāṭīn]* were pelted with stones *[rujimat]*[100] to drive them from the sky, and Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) swore by His Almighty Glory that His Name would never be uttered over an illness without His healing that illness, that His Name would never be pronounced over anything without His blessing it, and that anyone who ever recited 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*' would surely enter the Garden of Paradise."

We have it on the authority of Abū Wā'il that it was 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

"If anyone wishes to have Allāh rescue him from the clutches of the nineteen *zabāniya* [tormenting angels within the Fire of Hell], he has only to say: 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*,' for these words are spelled with nineteen letters [of the Arabic script],[101] and Allāh

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[100] The Arabic verb *rujimat* is formed from the three root letters *r-j-m*, from which the adjective *rajīm* [accursed], the passive participle *marjūm* [cursed] and the nouns *rijām* [gravestones] and *rujūm* [missiles] are also derived. The connections are fully explained in the preceding Discourse (see pp. 10–13 above).

[101] Namely, the Arabic letters: *bā', sīn, mīm, alif, lām, lām, hā', alif, lām, rā', ḥā', mīm, nūn, alif, lām, rā', ḥā', yā', mīm*. (As used in the text of this translation, the romanized transliteration of Arabic words and phrases is designed to represent the pronunciation, rather than the Arabic spelling.)

In the case of Bishr [ibn al-Ḥārith] al-Ḥāfī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), we are told that if a dish of food containing some dubious ingredient was served in front of him, his hand would simply refuse to reach out toward it.

As for the mother of Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī[249] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them both), they say that if she was about to stretch out her hand toward a dish of food containing some dubious ingredient, she would feel herself losing the spiritual state she had known since she became pregnant with Abū Yazīd, and she would therefore refrain from stretching out her hand toward that dish of food.

In the case of one saintly individual, if there was any dubious ingredient in the food served to him, the emergence of an unpleasant odor would give him warning, and he would then refuse to eat the tainted food.

We have also been told how one such person would find it impossible to chew on a morsel of food that contained some dubious ingredient, because it would turn into a substance like sand as soon as he put it inside his mouth.

Allāh (Exalted is He) makes all of these things happen for the benefit of such people, for the sake of easing their task, treating them with mercy and compassion, and granting them a protective shield. Once they have resolved to keep their diet pure, and have made a very serious effort to seek out lawful food *[halāl]*, as well as to abstain from anything unlawful *[hārām]* or dubious *[shubha]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will see fit to supply them with the means to guard against consuming any of those foodstuffs that they now regard with distaste.

He will then provide them with a fail-safe device for the detection of unlawful or dubious ingredients. He will also save them the trouble of having to conduct investigations and inquiries concerning the livelihood and lifestyle of the food merchant, the price he paid for the produce he is trying to sell, where it came from and whether he obtained it by lawful means, and so on and so forth. By equipping them with a simple warning device, Allāh (Exalted is He) has made all of that redundant, so, while they must keep their hands off the food whenever they notice the alarm signal, they can safely assume that it is lawful if they see that the alarm has not been triggered. This only applies, of course, to those noble masters *[sāda kirām]* who have already been blessed with providential care *[ʿināya]*, and have been assured of comprehensive safekeeping *[riʿāya]*.

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[249] Abū Yazīd Ṭaifūr ibn 'Īsā ibn Sorushān al-Bisṭāmī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was born in the district of Bisṭām in northeastern Persia, and it was there that he died in A.H. 261 or 264/874 or 877 C.E. He is famous for the boldness of his utterances.

As for the meaning of "lawful conduct *[ḥalāl]*"[250] in relation to the ordinary folk who make up the great majority of the believers *[muʾminīn]*, it can be defined as "every kind of behavior that does not cause a person to incur some liability toward his fellow creatures, and that does not render him subject to a penalty prescribed by the sacred law *[sharʿ]*."

Sahl ibn ʿAbdi'llāh at-Tustarī[251] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was asked more than once to explain the meaning of lawful conduct *[ḥalāl]*. He replied on one occasion by saying: "Lawful conduct *[ḥalāl]* is conduct in which one commits no sinful act of disobedience against Allāh." On another occasion he said: "Pure lawful conduct *[al-ḥalāl aṣ-ṣāfī]* is conduct in which one does not forget about Allāh."

As it is normally used, the term *ḥalāl* refers to something that is lawful as a matter of actual legal practice *[ḥalāl ḥukm]*, not to something that is lawful in essence or substance *[ḥalāl ʿain]*.

If *ḥalāl* could only mean lawful in essence or substance *[ḥalāl ʿain]*, it would never be permissible for anyone to eat carrion *[maita]*, or the meat of any animal not slaughtered in accordance with the ritual requirements of Islamic law.[252]

To make this point even clearer, let us consider the situation that arises when a corrupt government official *[shurṭī]* uses some of his ill-gotten money *[māl ḥarām]* to purchase lawful food *[ṭaʿām ḥalāl]*, but

[250] The basic meaning associated with the triliteral Arabic root *ḥ–l–l*, from which *ḥalāl* is one of many derivatives, is "untying." According to context , the term *ḥalāl* may need to be treated for translation purposes as: (1) a simple adjective, (2) an adjectival noun, or (3) an adjective qualifying an implicit noun. In each of these categories, the translator has several options to consider, e.g., (1) lawful, legal, licit, legitimate, allowed, allowable, permitted, permissible, admissible, (2) "that which is..." [lawful, legal, permissible, etc.], (3) lawful conduct, permissible behavior; lawful food; lawful property, legitimate possession; etc.

[251] Abū Muḥammad Sahl ibn ʿAbdi'llāh at-Tustarī was born at Tustar (Ahwāz) ca. A.H. 200/815 C.E. He studied with Sufyān ath-Thawrī, and met Dhu 'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them). His quiet life was interrupted in A.H. 261/874 C.E., when he was forced to seek refuge in Basra, where he died in A.H. 282/896 C.E. His influence is particularly evident in the teachings of the Sālimiyya school, which was founded by his pupil Ibn Sālim.

[252] Under certain circumstances, e.g., when a traveler is facing death from starvation, the eating of such meat is not merely permissible, but obligatory.

then goes back and cancels the deal, so that the food reverts to the possession of the original owner. In a case like this, if *ḥalāl* could only mean lawful in essence or substance *[ḥalāl 'ain]*, it would no longer be permissible for the fastidiously pious believer *[al-mutawarri' al-mu'min]* to eat the meat concerned, because something has happened in the meantime to make eating it unlawful, namely, its temporary acquisition by the corrupt government official. In actual practice, however, the Muslims are unanimously agreed on the permissibility of eating this food, in spite of the fact that it came into the possession of the corrupt government official, who purchased it with his ill-gotten money, the spending of which is regarded as unlawful by all the Muslims.

It must therefore be understood that the terms *ḥalāl* [lawful] and *ḥarām* [unlawful] refer to the normal application of the sacred law *[shar']*, not to the intrinsic nature *[nafs al-'ain]* of the food, because the only food that is intrinsically lawful is the food of the Prophets *[anbiyā']*, as we learn from this tradition *[ḥadīth]*:

> The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once heard a man say: "O Allāh, grant me a means of subsistence that is absolutely lawful *[ḥalāl muṭlaq]*!"
>
> The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then told him: "That is the sustenance of the Prophets *[rizq al-anbiyā']*. You must ask Allāh to grant you a means of subsistence for which He will not punish you!"

Let us also consider how the sacred law *[shar']* applies to the situation of the non-Muslim communities within the Islāmic state *[ahl adh-dhimma]*,[253] the Jews *[Yahūd]*, Christians *[Naṣārā]* and Zoroastrians *[Majūs]*, who trade in forbidden commodities *[muḥarramāt]* such as wine and pigs.

In allowing them to sell these commodities, and then collecting the tithe *['ushr]* from the proceeds of their sales, we are acting in accordance with the instruction handed down from [the rightly guided Caliph] 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him), for it was he who said:

"Leave them in charge of the business of selling [commodities unlawful to Muslims], and collect the tithe *['ushr]* from the proceeds of their sales. And what will be done with the tithe, once it has been collected from them? Surely the Muslims will put it to good use!"

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[253] The *ahl adh-dhimma* are the Jewish, Christian or Sabean subjects of an Islāmic state, who, in return for the payment of a special tax, are entitled under Islāmic law to security of their persons and their property.

If *ḥalāl* could only mean lawful in essence or substance *[ḥalāl ʿain]*, it would not be permissible to collect such a tithe, because wine and pigs and the proceeds from their sale are all intrinsically unlawful *[ḥarām]*. It has been made lawful in practice, however, in order to provide a valuable opportunity for constructive action.

As someone put it: "Between that which is lawful *[ḥalāl]* and that which is unlawful *[ḥarām]* there is a valuable opportunity."

In order to avail himself of this valuable opportunity, the believer must grasp the sacred law *[sharʿ]* and hold it in his hand like a lamp. He must make it the criterion by which to decide what he should take for himself and what he should give to others. He must not resort to fanciful interpretations in order to get around it, and he must never depart from it completely. He must take only that which the sacred law allows him to accept, and give only that which the sacred law permits him to give, and every aspect of his behavior must come to be in conformity with the sacred law.

Whatever he consumes must be lawful according to the sacred law, but he is not obliged to go looking for sustenance that is absolutely lawful in terms of its intrinsic nature *[al-ḥalāl al-muṭlaq al-ʿain]*, since this is virtually impossible to find. It is almost entirely beyond the scope of human experience, except that Allāh may wish to confer it upon some of His saints *[awliyāʾ]* and chosen ones *[asfiyāʾ]*.

> And that is no great matter for Allāh. (14:20)

From the standpoint of the kind of food that is lawful for them to eat, we can distinguish three separate types of people: (1) the ordinary person who is conscientious in doing his duty *[muttaqī]*; (2) the saint *[walī]*; and (3) the spiritual deputy who is endowed with intuitive knowledge *[badal ʿārif]*.

1. In the case of the ordinary person who is conscientious in doing his duty *[muttaqī]*, that which is lawful *[ḥalāl]* is that which does not cause him to incur any liability toward his fellow creatures, and that does not render him subject to a penalty prescribed by the sacred law *[sharʿ]*.

2. In the case of the genuine saint *[walī muḥaqq]*, since he is abstinent to the point of being completely detached from the influence of the

passions *[hawā]*, his diet must be one that does not include any fancy fare. His nourishment must be strictly in keeping with his spiritual condition.

3. As for the spiritual deputy *[badal]*,[254] he is someone who is endowed with intuitive knowledge *[ʿārif]*, who is used as an instrument *[mafʿūl fīh]*, and who is devoid of self-will *[irāda]*. He is the ball of the divine decree *[kurat al-qadar]*.[255] In his case, therefore, lawful food must mean nourishment that contains no ingredient connected with personal ambition *[himma]* or self-will *[irāda]*. It is in fact received entirely through the grace of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), who sustains him, guides him, and trains him by means of His all-embracing power *[qudra]*, His universal benevolence *[minna]*, and His unfailingly effective will *[mashīʾa]*, treating him like a suckling babe in the lap of his tenderhearted mother.

As long as the believer has yet to realize the full significance of the first stage, he cannot progress to the second stage, and as long as he has yet to realize the full significance of the second stage, he cannot progress to the third stage.

Just as the lawful food of the ordinary conscientious person *[muttaqī]* is of dubious legality *[shubha]* as far as the person who is free from the influence of the passions *[zāʾil al-hawā]* is concerned, the lawful food of the dispassionate individual is of dubious legality in the case of someone who is utterly devoid of self-will and personal ambition *[zāʾil al-irāda waʾl-himma]*.

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[254] *Badal* is the singular of *Abdāl*. In the Sixth Discourse of Revelations of the Unseen, Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) gives the following explanation:

> Annihilation *[fanāʾ]* is the aim and object, the final destination of the journey of the saints. This was the direction sought by all previous saints and *Abdāl*: to become extinct to their own will, and let the will of the Almighty and Glorious Truth take its place, as a permanent transformation, lasting until death. That is why they came to be called *Abdāl* [lit: 'substitutes'] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all).

[255] In a footnote supplied at this point in the Damascus edition of the Arabic text, the editor suggests: "Perhaps what the author means by this is that he is absolutely deprived of self-will."

In the Third Discourse of *Revelations of the Unseen [Futūḥ al-Ghaib]*, in which he describes the condition of a person completely submitted to the will of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) says:

> His status comes to resemble that of a suckling babe in its nurse's arms, of a corpse in the hands of a washer of the dead, or of a ball on the receiving end of a polo-player's mallet—rolled and spun and knocked around, though inert in itself and imparting no motion to other bodies.

As the saying goes: "The bad deeds of those drawn close [to Allāh] are the good deeds of pious devotees." The lawful food of the Shaikh is therefore permissible *[mubāḥ]* for the disciple *[murīd]*, but the lawful food of the disciple is unlawful *[ḥarām]* as far as the Shaikh is concerned, on account of the purity of his spiritual state, the probity of his rank, the loftiness of his station, and his proximity to his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He).

Some of the finer points of pious restraint *[wara']*, as illustrated by stories told about the Prophets, the saints and the righteous.

Kahmas (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"I once committed a sin, and I have been shedding tears because of it for all of forty years. It all began when a brother of mine paid me a visit. I bought a grilled fish, which cost me no more than a *dānaq* [small coin], and then, when he had finished eating it, I took a chunk of plaster from the wall of a neighbor of mine, so that my guest could use it to scrub his hand clean. To my regret, I did not take the trouble to ask my neighbor's permission first."

This next story is about a man who was living in a rented house. One day, having scribbled a note on a piece of paper, he thought he might dry the ink by sprinkling it with dust from the wall of the house. It occurred to him that the house was rented from someone else, so he hesitated for a moment, but then it occurred to him that this fact was of no importance, so he went ahead and sprinkled dust on the letter. Just then, he heard a mysterious voice *[hātif]* saying: "He who now treats dust so lightly, will surely learn tomorrow [at the Resurrection] what a lengthy reckoning lies in store for him!"

People once noticed that 'Utbat al-Ghulām[256] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was dripping with perspiration in the middle of winter. When they asked him how he came to be in such a sweat, he said: "This happens to be a place where I once committed a sinful act of disobedience against my Lord." They wanted to know more about it, so he went on to explain: "It was from this wall here that I scraped a lump of plaster, so that a guest of mine could use it to scrub his hand clean. To my regret, I did not take the trouble to ask the owner's permission first!"

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[256] Abū 'Abdi'llāh 'Utba ibn Abbān ibn Sam'a, a celebrated ascetic of Basra, was nicknamed 'Utbat al-Ghulām because he was a servant *[ghulām]*, not because he was a young man (another meaning of *ghulām*). His death in A.H. 153 preceded that of his own father. He was noted for his state of profound sorrow *[huzn]*, which has been compared to that of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī.

They say that Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once pawned a pail of his at a grocery store in Mecca. Some time later, when he was ready to redeem the pledge, the grocer brought out a couple of pails and set them in front of him. "Take whichever of the two belongs to you," said the grocer, but Imām Aḥmad replied: "It is hard for me to tell which pail is mine, so keep it, and keep the money too!" The grocer then said: "This one is yours. I only wanted to test you." "I shall not take it back," said Imām Aḥmad, as he walked away and left him holding the pail.

It is said that Rābi‘a al-‘Adawiyya[257] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon her) once sewed up a split in her dress by the light of a lamp belonging to the Sultān. As a result, she became out of touch with her heart for quite some time. When she finally recalled what had happened, she ripped her dress—and rediscovered her heart!

A person once had a dream in which he saw Sufyān ath-Thawrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) with a pair of wings, flying around the Garden of Paradise from tree to tree. "How did you achieve this state?" the dreamer asked him. "Through the practice of pious restraint *[wara‘]*," replied Sufyān.

For sixty long years, Ḥassān ibn Abī Sinān (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) never slept on a comfortable couch, never ate meat containing fat, and never drank a cool drink. After he had died, he was asked by someone who saw him in a dream: "How has Allāh treated you?" "Very well," he replied, "except that I am barred from the Garden of Paradise on account of a needle I once borrowed, and which I failed to return."

A man called ‘Abd al-Wāḥid ibn Zaid had a servant who worked for him for many years, and who was a devoted worshipper [of Allāh] for no less than forty years. At the very beginning of his career, this faithful servant had worked as a measurer of corn. After he had died, he was asked by someone who saw him in a dream: "How has Allāh treated you?" "Very well," he replied, "except that I am barred from the Garden of Paradise, having been confronted with a heap of corn dust amounting to forty measures of grain."

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[257] Rābi‘a bint Ismā‘īl al-‘Adawiyya (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon her) was born in humble circumstances. Sold into slavery as a child, she later settled in Basra, where she attained great renown as a remarkable saint and an effective preacher, and was highly esteemed by many of her pious contemporaries. Devoted to loving intimacy with Allāh (Exalted is He), she never married. The date of her death is given as A.H. 135/752 C.E. by some authorities, and A.H. 185/801 C.E. by others. Some point to a tomb near Jerusalem as her place of burial.

As Jesus (peace be upon him) was passing by a cemetery, he called out to one of the men who lay buried there, whereupon Allāh (Exalted is He) promptly brought the man back to life. Jesus asked: "Who are you?" and he said: "I used to be a porter, carrying things for other people. One day, while I was carrying a load of wood for a certain person, I broke off a splinter and used it to pick my teeth. I have been paying the consequences ever since I died."

Concerning the special merit of "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*."

From a traditional report that has been transmitted on the authority of 'Aṭā', we learn that Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said:

"When the expression 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*' was first sent down [by divine revelation to mankind], the clouds fled away to the East, the winds died down, the waves of the ocean heaved in a tempestuous storm, the beasts pricked up their ears to listen, the devils *[shayāṭīn]* were pelted with stones *[rujimat]*[100] to drive them from the sky, and Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) swore by His Almighty Glory that His Name would never be uttered over an illness without His healing that illness, that His Name would never be pronounced over anything without His blessing it, and that anyone who ever recited 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*' would surely enter the Garden of Paradise."

We have it on the authority of Abū Wā'il that it was 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

"If anyone wishes to have Allāh rescue him from the clutches of the nineteen *zabāniya* [tormenting angels within the Fire of Hell], he has only to say: 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*,' for these words are spelled with nineteen letters [of the Arabic script],[101] and Allāh

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[100] The Arabic verb *rujimat* is formed from the three root letters *r-j-m*, from which the adjective *rajīm* [accursed], the passive participle *marjūm* [cursed] and the nouns *rijām* [gravestones] and *rujūm* [missiles] are also derived. The connections are fully explained in the preceding Discourse (see pp. 10–13 above).

[101] Namely, the Arabic letters: *bā'*, *sīn*, *mīm*, *alif*, *lām*, *lām*, *hā'*, *alif*, *lām*, *rā'*, *ḥā'*, *mīm*, *nūn*, *alif*, *lām*, *rā'*, *ḥā'*, *yā'*, *mīm*. (As used in the text of this translation, the romanized transliteration of Arabic words and phrases is designed to represent the pronunciation, rather than the Arabic spelling.)

6. The sixth obligation is to acknowledge one's dependence on the gracious favor of Allāh (Exalted is He), as a precaution against self-centered conceit, since He has told us (Exalted is He):

> It is rather that Allāh is treating you with gracious favor, inasmuch as He has guided you to faith. (49:17)

7. The seventh obligation is to spend one's wealth on that which has true value *[ḥaqq]*, and not to spend it on that which is quite worthless *[bāṭil]*, because He has told us (Exalted is He):

> And [among His faithful servants are] those who, when they spend, are neither prodigal nor parsimonious. (25:67)

In other words, they neither spend their wealth on sinful disobedience, nor withhold it from the support of worshipful obedience.

8. The eighth obligation is not to go seeking high-and-mighty status and prestige for the sake of self-aggrandizement, because He has told us (Exalted is He):

> As for that Ultimate Abode, We shall assign it to those who are neither intent on high-and-mighty status on the earth, nor on corruption. (28:83)

9. The ninth obligation is to observe the five ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* at the times prescribed for them each day, following the correct sequence of bowing *[rukū']* and prostration *[sujūd]*, because He has told us (Exalted is He):

> Be careful to observe your prayers, and [especially] the middle prayer,[258] and stand obedient to Allāh. (2:238)

10. The tenth obligation is to stick to the course prescribed by the Sunna and the Jamā'a,[259] since He has told us (Exalted is He):

> And this path of Mine is straight, so follow it. Do not follow other paths, lest you be separated from His path. (6:154)

[258] Usually taken to mean the *'asr* prayer (in the middle of the afternoon).

[259] The *Sunna* is the exemplary precedent *[ma sanna]* set by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), while the *Jamā'a* is the common practice agreed upon by his Companions during the time of the rightly guided Caliphs, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with them all).

whom was himself the commander of a further hundred thousand, whereas the total strength of Solomon's army consisted of four hundred thousand soldiers, two hundred thousand being members of the human race, while the other two hundred thousand were drawn from the ranks of the jinn. The disparity between the two armies was clearly enormous, yet the king with his smaller army was enabled to be victorious, on account of his worshipful obedience, while the queen with her vastly larger army was vanquished, on account of her unbelief *[kufr]* and her sinful disobedience.

You must therefore acknowledge the fact, O human being, that Islām will surely prevail, and that it will not be overcome.

> And Allāh will not grant the unbelievers any way [by which to triumph] over the believers. (4:141)

Likewise in your case, O you who have access to the help and guidance of Allāh, as long as you truly believe *[āmanta]*, you will be safe *[aminta]*, not only from your enemies in this world, but also from Allāh's blazing fire in the world of the hereafter. The Fire of Hell will put itself at your service. It will bow its head silently before you, and it will show you the way [to pass through in safety], treating you with honor and respect in obedience to the commandment of its Master *[Mawlā]* and in compliance with His instructions. It will actually say to you: "Pass on through, O believer, since your light has extinguished my flame!"[91]

If you have earned the right to be addressed with such courtesy and politeness by the Fire of Hell, it must mean that you are a truly dignified and enlightened person. Since you are clad in the robe of honor conferred by the King, and since you bear the distinctive mark of the kind of dignity that always commands respect, it is incumbent upon all the royal attendants and slaves to treat you with the utmost reverence and solemnity, and to put themselves at your service.

As for the unbeliever *[kāfir]* and the rebellious sinner, the Fire of Hell will fly into a furious rage against them. It will wreak vengeance on them with all the vindictiveness of a cruel tyrant, when he takes his revenge on the enemy he has just defeated in battle.

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[91] Although he does not mention the attribution here, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well-pleased with him) has told us elsewhere, notably in the Thirteenth Discourse of *Revelations of the Unseen [Futuh al-Ghaib]*, that this saying can be found in "traditions reliably ascribed to the best of humankind, the best of those ever carried by the earth and sheltered by the sky, Muhammad the Chosen (Allāh bless him and give him peace)."

and who seeks the company of those who know it well. People are therefore not measured at the very outset by a standard that can only be applied at the ultimate stage of the whole process.

> You have been sent forth on a journey that is meant to be smooth and easy for you, not on one that is meant to be difficult or even terrifying. [The path of] this religion *[dīn]* is firmly established, so advance along it in friendship, for the traveler who gets separated can neither keep on track nor stay the course.[260]

Another example of selective repentance is the case of a person who does penance for some, but not all, of the major sins *[kabā'ir]*, in recognition of the fact that some of them are more serious than others in the sight of Allāh, and that the punishment they incur is harsher and more severe. For instance, he may decide to do penance for murder *[qatl]*, robbery *[nahb]*, and all the wrongs he has committed against his fellow human beings, in recognition of the fact that human claims *[duyūn al-'ibād]* must never be left unsettled, whereas pardon is easily and swiftly obtained in matters that are entirely between him and Allāh (Exalted is He).

Or then again, he may decide to do penance for the sin of drinking intoxicating liquor *[shurb al-khamr]*, but not for having committed adultery or fornication *[zinā]*, in recognition of the fact that intoxicating liquor is the key to all that is evil *[al-khamru miftāḥu'sh-sharr]*. In the irrational state induced by intoxicating liquor, a person is liable to commit all the sins in the book. Without being consciously aware of what he is doing, he may become guilty of slander *[qadhf]*,[261] verbal abuse *[sabb]*, rejection of belief *[kufr]* in Allāh, sexual misconduct *[zinā]*, homicide *[qatl]*, and the unlawful seizure of property *[ghaṣb]*, because intoxicating liquor is the compendium of all sinful acts of disobedience; it is their mother and their point of origin.

Yet another example of selective repentance is the case of a person who does penance for a minor sin *[ṣaghīra]*, or for several minor sins *[ṣaghā'ir]*, while he is still persisting in the commission of a major sin *[kabīra]*. For instance, he may decide to do penance for backbiting *[ghība]*, or for staring at a forbidden object *[muḥarram]*, even though he is still persisting in the greater sin of drinking intoxicating liquor. In coming to such a decision, he will be influenced by the intensity of his addiction to intoxicating liquor, the passion he has developed for it, the fact that drinking it has become a regular habit, and the self-induced illusion that he is using it as a medicine to cure his ailments.

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[260] The editor of the Arabic text (Damascus edition) has marked this paragraph as a quotation. It may be a saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), or even a Divine saying *[Ḥadīth Qudsī]*.

[261] See note [153] above.

It is true, of course, that the use of alcohol for medicinal purposes may sometimes be prescribed for us, but the addict's view is distorted by the devil *[shaiṭān]*, who cunningly helps him to see his addiction in a favorable light, and by the sheer force of his own appetite for liquor. He drinks it for the sake of the pleasure and enjoyment it provides, in order to banish his cares and worries, and because it is supposed to be good for one's physical health.

The more he becomes addicted to it, the more it makes him oblivious to the disastrous consequences that lie in store for him. It makes him heedless of the punishment that Allāh will eventually inflict upon him on account of his addiction. It makes him unaware of its corrupting influence on his religious values and his worldly affairs alike, because it erodes the rational faculty, the faculty that is used to balance religious and worldly interests and keep them in good array.

When we maintain the validity of repenting some of these sins but not others, we are simply acknowledging the inescapable fact that the record of every Muslim, for all practical purposes, is bound to show a combination of worshipful obedience to Allāh and sinful disobedience toward Him. Individuals differ, of course, but only in the specific details of their case histories. As for the enormity or triviality of particular sins, this is a relative question, since it all depends on the spiritual states of the people concerned, and whether they are close to Allāh or distant from Him.

The inveterate transgressor *[fāsiq]* would therefore do well to say: "If the devil *[shaiṭān]* succeeds, by means of some irresistible temptation, in coercing me to commit certain acts of sinful disobedience, there is no need for me to let go of the reins completely, to abandon all semblance of restraint, and then freely indulge in every kind of sin. Instead of simply giving up the struggle, I shall at least make the effort to single out a few sins that I could give up without too much trouble, then I shall stop committing them.

My success in dealing with some of the problems may serve as an atonement *[kaffāra]* for some of the rest. Perhaps Allāh will notice that I am afraid of offending Him by committing certain sinful acts of disobedience, that I am now refraining from them for His sake, and that I am doing battle with my lower self *[nafs]* and my devil *[shaiṭān]* in the process. If He does take notice, He will surely support my efforts and help me to succeed. Through His mercy, He may even keep me from committing any other sinful acts of disobedience!"

If the truth of the matter were not as we have stated it, no ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* performed by an inveterate transgressor *[fāsiq]* could ever be valid, nor could there be any validity to his fasting *[ṣawm]*, his payment of the alms-due *[zakāt]*, his pilgrimage *[ḥajj]*, or any other act of worshipful obedience, since he would be told:

"You are an inveterate transgressor. You have excluded yourself from obedience to Allāh by your inveterate sinfulness *[fisq]*. You act in defiance of His commandment, so this worship *['ibāda]* of yours must be intended for some purpose other than the service of Allāh (Exalted is He). If you are serious in claiming that your worship is really and truly for the sake of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), you must abandon your inveterate sinfulness. Obedience to Allāh must be your sole concern, so it is inconceivable that you could perform your ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* with the intention of winning Allāh's favor, as long as you have not demonstrated your intention to win His favor by refraining from your inveterate sinfulness." This is so preposterous, of course, that it could not actually be said.

The only true analogy is the case of a person who is in debt to the tune of two dīnārs, owing one dīnār to each of two men. Although he is sufficiently solvent to be capable of repaying them both, he hands one of the two dīnārs to one of the two men, and refuses to hand over the other. He disavows his debt to the second man, even though he is well aware that the man is perfectly entitled to receive what is due to him. In a case like this, there can be no doubt that the debtor's conscience is clear of the obligation he has actually discharged, while it still bears the burden of responsibility for that which he has disavowed and refused to settle.

By the same token, a person who obeys Allāh (Exalted is He), at least as far as some of His commandments are concerned, is obedient to Him by virtue of his obedience. If he also disobeys Him by disregarding some of His prohibitions, he is disobedient toward Him by virtue of his disobedience. He is therefore a "solvent" believer *[mu'min malī']* whose faith is less than perfect. He is an obedient servant [of Allāh] by virtue of his obedience, and a disobedient and recalcitrant servant by virtue of his recalcitrance.

This is the habitual condition of someone who is still a mixer *[mukhliṭ]* as far as his religion *[dīn]* is concerned. It does not change until he reaches the stage of development where his passions *[hawā]* have ceased to be in control. He will then be acquitted of all acts of sinful disobedience, unless Allāh wishes to condemn him for them, since we have no absolute immunity *['iṣma]*.

Allāh relents toward those who repent, and He graciously bestows His mercy upon those who turn away from sin.

Traditional narratives *[akhbār]* and reports *[āthār]* on the subject of repentance *[tawba]*.[262]

It was Jābir ibn ‘Abdi’llāh[263] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who narrated the following traditions:

Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) delivered a sermon one Friday, in the course of which he told us:

> O people, repent to Allāh before you die. Set about the performance of righteous works *[a‘māl sāliha]* without delay, before you are too preoccupied. Reconcile whatever differences you have with your Lord, for then you will prosper. Be generous in giving alms *[sadaqa]*, for then you will be well provided for. Enjoin that which is right and fair *[ma‘rūf]*, for then you will be granted protection, and forbid that which is wrong and unfair *[munkar]*, for then you will be enabled to achieve success.[264]

He would often say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> O Allāh, forgive me and relent toward me, for You are indeed the Ever-Relenting *[Tawwāb]*, the All-Compassionate *[Rahīm]*.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> When Iblīs was sent down to the earth, he said: “By Your Glory and by Your Majesty, I swear that I shall not cease to mislead the human being *[ibn Ādam]*, as long as he has a breath left in his body.” The Lord then said: “By My Glory and by My Majesty, I shall not refuse to accept his repentance, as long as he has not made that gurgling sound with his final breath.”

Muhammad ibn ‘Abdi’llāh as-Sulamī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

“Once, in Medina, I went and sat with a group of people who were Companions of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). While I was sitting in their presence, one man said: ‘I heard

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[262] For the technical meanings of the terms *akhbār* (plural of *khabar*) and *āthār* (plural of *athar*), see notes [178] and [207] above.

[263] See note [223] above.

[264] For an extensive account of the duty to enjoin that which is right and fair *[al-amr bi’l-ma‘rūf]*, and forbid that which is wrong and unfair *[an-nahy ‘ani’l-munkar]*, see Vol. 1, pp. 151–70.

According to another thesis of theirs, Allāh (Exalted is He) is reciting upon the tongue of every reciter of the Qur’ān *[yaqra’u ‘alā lisāni kulli qāri’]*, and that when people are listening to the Qur’ān as it is being read by a reciter, they are actually hearing it from Allāh. To make such an assertion is to come perilously close to professing [the heretical doctrine of] *ḥulūl* [hylomorphism or incarnation].[129] We take refuge with Allāh from that kind of error. If followed through to its logical consequence, it would amount to asserting that Allāh (Exalted is He) could be guilty of making grammatical mistakes and of mispronouncing the Arabic words of the text [as many unskilled reciters obviously do while they are reading the Qur’ān]. This would be nothing short of unbelief *[kufr]*.

The Sālimiyya also profess the doctrine that Allāh (Exalted is He) is in every place, and that there is no distinction to be drawn between the Throne *[‘Arsh]* and other places. Here again, the evidence to refute their falsehood is to be found in the Qur’ān itself, where Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> The All-Merciful has firmly established Himself upon the Throne *[ar-Raḥmānu ‘ala’l-‘arshi’stawā]*. (20:5)

There is no statement to the effect that He has firmly established Himself upon the earth *[‘ala’l-arḍi’stawā]*, nor on the bellies of the mountains *[‘ala buṭūni’l-jibāl]* and other places besides these.

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[129] The philosophical term *ḥulūl* is derived from the Arabic verb *ḥalla*, meaning “to loosen, unfold, alight, settle in a place *[maḥall]*.” As a technical term of classical Islamic theology, it came to be applied to the relation between a body and its location, or between an accident and its substance. The expression *ḥulūl ar-rūḥ fi’l-badan* has been applied to the substantial union of the body and the soul, and *ḥulūl al-‘aql al-fa‘‘āl fi’l-insān* to the substantial union of a divine spirit with man.

Al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "You must not entertain the wishful expectation of forgiveness without repentance *[tauba]*, nor of spiritual reward without good work *['amal]*, because it is impertinent to provoke Allāh by behaving in a way that is calculated to displease Him, by neglecting the work that pleases Him, and then expecting Him to grant forgiveness. Those wishful expectations will beguile you, until His verdict on you comes into effect."

Surely you must have heard Him say (Exalted is He):

> And wishful expectations beguiled you until the ordinance of Allāh came to pass, and the Deluder deluded you concerning Allāh. (57:14)
>
> And I am indeed All-Forgiving toward anyone who repents and believes, and does righteous work, and then is rightly guided. (20:82)
>
> And My mercy embraces all things, so I shall prescribe it for those who do their duty and pay the alms-due, and those who believe in Our signs. (7:156)

The ambitious desire for Divine Mercy and the Garden of Paradise, without repentance *[tauba]* and without devotion to duty *[taqwā]*, is therefore nothing short of folly, ignorance and delusion, because repentance and devotion to duty are both clearly stipulated in these last two verses *[āyatain]* quoted from the Qur'ān.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

> The true believer *[mu'min]* looks upon his sins as if he were standing at the foot of a mountain, afraid that it might topple down upon him. As for the shameless sinner *[fājir]*, he looks upon his sins as if they were merely flies that had settled on his nose, so he assumes that they will buzz off as soon as he tells them to do so.

He once said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> It may happen that the servant [of Allāh] commits a sin, and that the sin enables him to enter the Garden of Paradise.

When they asked him: "O Prophet of Allāh, how can it possibly enable him to enter the Garden of Paradise?" he replied:

> The sin keeps staring him in the eye, so he begs forgiveness for it. He feels remorse over it, and repents, so it actually enables him to enter the Garden of Paradise!

He has also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> I have never seen a remedy that is more appropriate, or that takes effect more rapidly, than a new good deed applied to an old sin.

In the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> Good deeds drive evil deeds away. This is a reminder for the mindful. (11:114)

throne would be mounted on four pillars of gold, then she would take her seat upon it, in a position from which she could see the people without their being able to see her.

If any man wished to apply to her for help with some problem or matter of business, he could present her with his request. In order to do so, he had to stand there in her presence, showing respect for her by keeping his head bowed low and not looking in her direction, then by prostrating himself without raising his head, until she gave him permission to speak. When she had dealt with their concerns and delivered her instructions, she would withdraw into her palace, and they would not see her again until the same day of the following week.

Her authority was a mighty authority indeed, so when the hoopoe arrived with the letter, he found that all the gates and doors had been locked to ensure her privacy, while the guards were on duty all around the castle, patrolling the entire perimeter. In the face of these formidable obstacles, he nevertheless kept searching for some way of getting through to Queen Bilqīs, until he finally succeeded—through a skylight in the roof of the palace.

Once he had discovered this opening, he went from one royal suite to the next, until he finally came to the far end of seven suites, where her throne towered thirty cubits high. It was there that he saw her, lying sound asleep upon her throne. She was wearing nothing at all, except for a piece of cloth to cover her most private part *['awra]*, this being her usual habit whenever she lay down to sleep. He therefore placed the letter beside her on the elevated couch, then flew up and perched in a skylight, expecting that she would soon wake up from her slumber and read the letter.

As it turned out, however, he stayed there waiting for a very long time, while she was still not showing any sign of waking up. The moment came when he could tolerate no further delay, so he swooped down and pecked her. She came to her senses immediately, and the first thing she caught sight of was the letter, lying right there beside her on the couch. She picked it up, rubbed her eyes, and started to examine the condition of the letter. How could such a letter have reached her anyway, she wondered, what with the doors all locked....

She went outside to check, and finding that the guards were still on

4. The penitent who is turning in repentance from letting his heart feel at ease with anything other than the Creator of all creatures *[Khāliq al-bariyyāt]*.

The Prophets (peace be upon them) were certainly not beyond the need for repentance. Just consider the saying traditionally ascribed to our own Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> A coating of rust is always threatening to cover my heart, so I beg forgiveness of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) no less than seventy times every day and night.

As soon as Adam (peace be upon him) had eaten the fruit of the forbidden tree, all the clothes he had been wearing immediately stripped themselves off his body and scattered in every direction, leaving him with his private parts exposed to view. His head was still covered, however, because his crown and diadem felt too embarrassed to take themselves off and leave him bareheaded, so Gabriel (peace be upon him) had to come and take the crown *[tāj]* from his head and the diadem *[iklīl]* from his brow.

Adam and Eve then heard the voice of the Lord, as He told them: "Get yourselves down below, the pair of you, out of My vicinity, for no one who disobeys Me can be allowed to dwell in close proximity to Me."

So Adam turned to Eve in shame, as he said to her: "This first disastrous act of sinful disobedience has resulted in our expulsion from the vicinity of the Beloved, obliging us to accept the necessity of repentance *[tawba]*, humble entreaty *[taḍarruʿ]*, begging like a pauper *[iftiqār]*, submissive resignation *[istikāna]* and abasement *[dhilla]*—and all this after we had been so accustomed to a comfortably settled way of life *[ʿaish qārr]*."

They had in fact been accustomed to a way of life in which they enjoyed enormous power and wealth, great luxury, honor and dignity, gracious favor, and exalted rank in the noblest of situations— in those that are most pure, in those that are most secure, and in those that are nearest to Allāh (Exalted is He). So, if there had ever been anyone who could dispense with repentance, who could feel quite safe from any hostile force, be it the mischief of the lower self *[nafs]* or the whispered insinuations *[waswās]* and cunning machinations of the Devil *[Shaiṭān]*, and who could pride himself on the nobility and purity of his situation, on his nearness to Allāh and the closeness of his station, the person

More sayings on the subject of repentance *[tawba]*.

According to Abū Umāma al-Bāhilī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The guardian angel of the right-hand side *[ṣāḥib al-yamīn]* is in command of the guardian angel of the left-hand side *[ṣāḥib ash-shimāl]*, so if the servant [of Allāh] does a good deed, the guardian angel of the right side records ten good deeds in his credit column, and if he does a bad deed, the guardian angel of the left side is ready to record it in his debit column—but before he has time to do so, the guardian angel of the right side says: "Don't do that just yet!" He is then obliged to restrain himself for six or seven hours of the day.
>
> During that time the servant may beg forgiveness of Allāh (Exalted is He), in which case the angel will not record anything against him, or he may fail to beg forgiveness, in which case the angel will record one bad deed in his debit column.

Another version reads as follows:

> If the servant [of Allāh] commits a sin, it is not recorded against him unless and until he commits another sin. If the sins in his debit column add up to a total of five, and if he then does one good deed, five good deeds will be recorded in his favor, and those five will be set down opposite five bad deeds. At this point Iblīs (may Allāh curse him) will cry out in dismay: "How can I hope to get the better of the son of Adam? However hard I try, he renders all my effort null and void by means of a single good deed!"

According to a report transmitted by Yūnus [ibn 'Ubaidi'llāh], on the authority of al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> There is not one servant [of Allāh] who does not have two angels watching over him, and the guardian angel of the right-hand side *[ṣāḥib al-yamīn]* is in command of the guardian angel of the left-hand side *[ṣāḥib ash-shimāl]*.
>
> Whenever the servant does a bad deed, the guardian angel of the left side asks his commander: "Shall I write it down?" The guardian angel of the right side responds to this by telling him: "Leave it until he has committed five bad deeds." Then, when the servant has in fact committed five bad deeds, the guardian

> angel of the left side will ask again: "Shall I write them down?" This time the guardian angel of the right side will say: "Leave it until he does a good deed." Then, when the servant has in fact performed a good deed, the guardian angel of the right side will say to his subordinate: "We have been informed that one good deed should be multiplied by ten, so let us proceed to cancel five [bad deeds] with five [good deeds], and then make sure that five of the good deeds are definitely recorded in his favor."
>
> At this point the devil *[shaiṭān]* will cry out in dismay: "When shall I ever catch up with the son of Adam?"

These traditional sayings *[aḥādīth]* are all consistent with His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> And I am indeed All-Forgiving toward anyone who repents and believes, and does righteous work, and then is rightly guided. (20:82)

According to ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh ennoble his countenance): "These words were inscribed around the Heavenly Throne *[ʿArsh]* four thousand years before Adam was created: 'And I am indeed All-Forgiving toward anyone who repents and believes, and does righteous work, and then is rightly guided.'"

These traditional sayings are also in harmony with His words (Exalted is He):

> Good deeds drive evil deeds away. This is a reminder for the mindful. (11:114)

Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said: "When the servant repents, and when Allāh relents toward him, Allāh (Exalted is He) causes that servant's angelic custodians *[hafaẓa]* to forget the bad deeds he has committed. He causes his physical limbs and organs to forget the sinful mistakes they have made. He causes him to forget his place of residence on earth, and He causes him to forget his place of residence in heaven. So, when he comes forth on the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*, there will be nothing whatsoever to bear witness against him."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> He who repents his sin is like someone who is guiltless of any sin.

In one version, this is followed by the words:

> ...even if he has repeated it seventy times a day.

ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Masʿūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "If someone says: 'I beg forgiveness of Allāh the Almighty, affirming that there is no god but He, the Ever-Living, the Eternally Self-Sustaining, and I turn to Him in repentance,'[271] and if he says this three times over, He will forgive him his sins, even if they are as many as the flecks of foam upon the ocean."

Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having said: "When a person first examines his record book on the Day of Resurrection, he will see his sinful acts of disobedience inscribed in the front part, and his good deeds toward the end. But when he turns back to the early pages of the book, he will see nothing but good deeds recorded there." This is in keeping with His words (Exalted is He):

> As for them, Allāh will change their evil deeds into good deeds. (25:70)

The recipient of this favor will be the penitent upon whose repentance *[tauba]* and contrition *[ināba]* Allāh has set the seal of acceptance.

One of our worthy forefathers *[salaf]* said: "If the servant [of Allāh] repents his sins, all the sins he has committed in the past will be converted into good deeds."

This explains why Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "On the Day of Resurrection, some people will wish that their bad deeds were more numerous." He only said this because Allāh (Exalted is He) had spoken of transforming bad deeds into good deeds for the benefit of whomever He might choose among His servants.

According to a report transmitted on the authority of al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If one of you committed enough sins to fill the space between heaven and earth, and then repented, Allāh would relent toward him [and accept his repentance].

Such is the import of the [Divine] saying that has come down to us in the tradition *[khabar]*:

> O son of Adam, even if you came to meet Me with sins as huge as the earth itself, I would come to meet you with a correspondingly enormous measure of forgiveness.

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[271] *astaghfiru'llāha'l-'Aẓīma'lladhī lā ilāha illā Huwa'l-Ḥayyu'l-Qayyūm, wa atūbu ilaih.*

A continuation of the preceding theme.

It happened one day, according to traditional reports, that 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was making his way through a certain quarter of the city of Kūfa, when he passed by a place where some dissolute types *[fussāq]* had congregated in a house belonging to one of their own kind. They were drinking intoxicating liquor, and they had with them a singer by the name of Zādhān, who was playing the lute *['ūd]* as he sang with a beautiful voice.

When 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) heard the song Zādhān was singing, he exclaimed aloud: "What a beautiful voice that man has! If only he would use it for the recitation *[qirā'a]* of the Book of Allāh (Exalted is He), it would be even more beautiful!" Then he wrapped his scarf around his head [to shut out the sound] and went on his way.

"Who was that?" asked Zādhān, who had heard the voice of the passerby. "That was 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd," they told him, "the Companion of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)." Zādhān went on to ask what he had said, so they told him: "He said: 'What a beautiful voice that man has! If only he would use it for the recitation of the Qur'ān, it would be even more beautiful!'"

As soon as Zādhān heard this, a feeling of awe invaded his heart. He rose to his feet, dashed the lute against the floor and shattered it to pieces, then rushed out in pursuit of the man whose words had touched him so profoundly. When he caught up with 'Abdu'llāh, he put the scarf around his own neck and began to weep close beside him, so 'Abdu'llāh embraced him, and the pair of them wept as they hugged each other. After a while, 'Abdu'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said: "How can I fail to love someone whom Allāh loves?"

Thus it came to pass that Zādhān repented, gave up playing the lute, and stayed close to 'Abdu'llāh until he had learned the Qur'ān. As a matter of fact, he acquired such a vast store of learning that he became an Imām in the field of religious knowledge *['ilm]*. Many traditional reports *[akhbār]* are prefaced by the narrator with the words: "As related by Zādhān, on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) ...," and: "As related by Zādhān, on the authority of Salmān al-Fārisī[272] (may Allāh be well pleased with him)...."

The next story is one of the tales of the Israelites *[Isrā'īliyyāt]*:[273]

Once upon a time there lived a seductive whore, a singer who captivated people with her beauty. The door of her house was always open, and she used to sit on a couch facing the door, so that any man who happened to pass by would be sure to see her and be tempted by her charm. Before she would permit him to enter into her presence, however, he would be required to produce ten dīnārs [gold coins], or even more than that.

Now it happened one day that a pious worshipper, one of the Children of Israel, was walking past her door when he caught a glimpse of her inside the house. At the sight of her sitting on the couch, he became so infatuated with her that he got into an argument with his own lower self *[nafs]*. He eventually appealed to Allāh (Exalted is He), beseeching Him to let the feeling disappear from his heart. In spite of this, his lower self continued to respond to the temptation.

Since he could not control his lower self, he went and sold some junk he had in his possession. As soon as he had raised the necessary number of dīnārs, he presented himself at the woman's door, at which point she told him to hand the gold to an agent of hers, and made an appointment with him for a certain date and time.

When the man showed up at her house to keep the appointment, he found her beautifully made up, sitting there waiting for him on her couch. The pious worshipper went in and sat beside her on the couch, but then, just when he had stretched out his hands to touch her and was beginning to enjoy what he was doing with her, Allāh suddenly overwhelmed him with His mercy, in gracious recognition of his previous worship. He immediately found himself realizing within his heart: "Allāh (Exalted is He) can see me in this situation from His

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[272] Salmān al-Fārisī [the Persian], a notable Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), is one of the most popular figures in Islāmic legends. He died ca. A.H. 35.

[273] The traditions called *Isrā'īliyyāt* are generally transmitted on the authority of notable Jewish converts to Islām, such as Wahb ibn Munabbih and Ka'b al-Ahbār.

Throne on high. Here am I, engaged in something so unlawful *[ḥarām]* that all my good work has come to nothing!" His heart was stricken with dread. He began to tremble all over, and a change became noticeable in the color of his skin.

The woman looked at him and saw that he was changing color, so she said to him: "What has come over you, man?" He replied: "I am afraid of Allāh, of my Lord, so please permit me to leave." She then said to him: "Woe unto you! Many people would dearly love to experience the pleasure you have found, so what can this be that has such a weird effect upon you?" All he could say to this was: "I am really afraid of Allāh (Glorious is He, to Whom all praise is due!), and as for the money I paid to your agent, you may treat it as rightfully yours, so please permit me to leave!"

The woman responded to this by saying: "It seems as though you have never done this kind of thing before." When he said: "No, indeed I have not," she asked him: "Where are you from, and what is your name?" So he told her that he came from the village called such and such, and that his own name was so and so. At this point she finally permitted him to take his leave of her, so off he went, wailing and lamenting and weeping over himself.

As for the woman, her heart was suddenly stricken with a sense of awe, inspired by her experience with that pious worshipper, so she said inwardly to herself: "This man was committing the very first sin he had ever committed, and yet he was invaded by a fear of such intensity, while I have been sinning since the year dot. But the fact is that the Lord he fears is also my Lord, which means that my fear ought to be even more intense than his fear."

She thereupon repented to Allāh (Exalted is He), locked her door to shut people out, dressed in rags and tatters, and turned in the direction of worshipful service *['ibāda]*. She came to be in her worship what Allāh (Exalted is He) wished her to be, so she said inwardly to herself: "If only I could meet up with that man again, perhaps he would marry me. Then I could be with him and learn all about my religion *[dīn]* from him, and he would be a great help to me in the worshipful service of my Lord."

She therefore equipped herself to undertake a journey, carrying with her as many goods and servants as Allāh willed, and so it was that she

In the case of Bishr [ibn al-Ḥārith] al-Ḥāfī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), we are told that if a dish of food containing some dubious ingredient was served in front of him, his hand would simply refuse to reach out toward it.

As for the mother of Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī[249] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them both), they say that if she was about to stretch out her hand toward a dish of food containing some dubious ingredient, she would feel herself losing the spiritual state she had known since she became pregnant with Abū Yazīd, and she would therefore refrain from stretching out her hand toward that dish of food.

In the case of one saintly individual, if there was any dubious ingredient in the food served to him, the emergence of an unpleasant odor would give him warning, and he would then refuse to eat the tainted food.

We have also been told how one such person would find it impossible to chew on a morsel of food that contained some dubious ingredient, because it would turn into a substance like sand as soon as he put it inside his mouth.

Allāh (Exalted is He) makes all of these things happen for the benefit of such people, for the sake of easing their task, treating them with mercy and compassion, and granting them a protective shield. Once they have resolved to keep their diet pure, and have made a very serious effort to seek out lawful food *[halāl]*, as well as to abstain from anything unlawful *[hārām]* or dubious *[shubha]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will see fit to supply them with the means to guard against consuming any of those foodstuffs that they now regard with distaste.

He will then provide them with a fail-safe device for the detection of unlawful or dubious ingredients. He will also save them the trouble of having to conduct investigations and inquiries concerning the livelihood and lifestyle of the food merchant, the price he paid for the produce he is trying to sell, where it came from and whether he obtained it by lawful means, and so on and so forth. By equipping them with a simple warning device, Allāh (Exalted is He) has made all of that redundant, so, while they must keep their hands off the food whenever

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[249] Abū Yazīd Ṭaifūr ibn 'Īsā ibn Sorushān al-Bisṭāmī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was born in the district of Bisṭām in northeastern Persia, and it was there that he died in A.H. 261 or 264/874 or 877 C.E. He is famous for the boldness of his utterances.

You will be kept safe from all abominations, from the morally corrupt, from heretical innovations *[bida']*, and from errors of every kind. Then, because of the positive influence you will naturally exert, the elimination of indecent behavior will be accomplished without obtrusive and self-righteous effort, and without turning that which is right and proper *[ma'rūf]* into something wrong and improper *[munkar]*, as is usually the case in our own day and age.

The typical person nowadays is unwilling to admit that he could ever do anything reprehensible, so he readily branches out into a host of abominations and terrible wickedness, such as verbal abuse, slanderous accusation *[qadhf]*,[275] assault and battery, molestation,[276] and the misappropriation of material assets. This is all due to the fact that people are so lacking in their honesty *[sidq]*, so deficient in their faith *[īmān]* and conviction *[yaqīn]*, and so totally dominated by their whims and passions *[ahwiya]*. Reprehensible behavior has therefore been carried to great lengths among them. The elimination of such misconduct is incumbent on them as a religious duty *[fard]*, which they ought to discharge by making protracted efforts to examine and correct their own faults, but they prefer to find fault with everyone but themselves. They disregard the duty that is incumbent on the individual *[fard 'ain]*, and attach importance only to the collective duty *[fard 'ala'l-kifāya]*.[277] They pay no attention to what ought to concern them, and become preoccupied with that which is no concern of theirs, ignoring the words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Part of the excellence of a man's Islām is paying no attention to that which does not concern him.

If a person truly wishes to become an instrument for the speedy elimination of reprehensible conduct, he must make a practice of criticizing and reprimanding his own lower self *[nafs]*. He must hold it in check and wean it away from sinful acts of disobedience, from those that are inwardly concealed as well as those that are outwardly apparent.

Once he has cleansed himself of all such faults, and not a moment sooner, it will be appropriate for him to pay attention to other people. When he has reached that stage, he will be enabled to facilitate the elimination of reprehensible behavior by the best of all possible means, as in the case of 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him).[278]

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[275] See note [153] above.

[276] Literally, the ripping off of clothes *[takhriq ath-thiyāb]*.

[277] See note [161] above.

Let us also consider the blessed grace *[baraka]* that was bestowed in recognition of devout service *['ibāda]* and truthfulness *[ṣidq]* on the part of that pious worshipper, as we recall how Allāh rescued him from the prostitute and saved him from the commission of a major sin.

> So it was, that We might turn evil and lewdness away from him; he was surely one of Our devoted servants. (12:24)

Allāh (Exalted is He) intervened between him and that harlot, giving him credit for his previous good conduct, for his honesty in private situations, and the excellent quality of his obedience in all the days and hours that had gone before.

Let us go on to consider how Allāh (Exalted is He) granted salvation to that whore, through the blessed influence of the pious worshipper, and then how his blessed influence reached his brother. Let us remember that Allāh delivered the man's brother from his life of poverty and hardship, and married him to the best of women. He enriched him and provided for him from a source he could never have imagined.[279] He caused him to be the father of seven Prophets *[anbiyā']*, and He caused her to be their mother (peace be upon them all).

All that is good resides in worshipful obedience, and all that is evil lies in sinful disobedience, so away with sinful disobedience, and away with us too, if we are members of its family!

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[278] As the reader will no doubt recall, 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was instrumental in reforming the conduct of Zādhān.

[279] An allusion to the promise made by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), when He tells us in the Qur'ān:

> And whenever someone observes his duty to Allāh, Allāh will prepare a way out for him. And He will provide for him from sources he could never imagine. And whoever puts all his trust in Allāh, He will suffice him *[wa man yattaqi'llāha yaj'al lahu makhrajā—wa yarzuqhu min haithu lā yaḥtasib: wa man yatawakkal 'ala'llāhi fa-Huwa ḥasbuh]* (65:2,3)

Four sets of four:

The four signs that point to repentance *[tawba]*; the four signs that point to the acceptance of repentance; the four obligations owed to the penitent by other people; the four noble honors conferred on the penitent by Allāh (Exalted is He).

Four things make it possible to recognize the genuine nature of the penitent's repentance *[tawbat at-tā'ib]*, namely:

(a) The fact that he keeps his tongue from indulging in idle gossip, backbiting *[ghība]*, slander *[namīma]*, and telling lies.

(b) The fact that he does not harbor within his heart any feelings of envy or animosity toward anyone.

(c) The fact that he does not associate with evil companions, for such people would try to persuade him to abandon the resolution he has made, and their influence would make him feel confused about the validity of his firm commitment. In order to ensure that nothing of this sort can happen, he must persist in frequenting the kind of environment that will tend to increase his enthusiasm for repentance, and that will offer him plenty of incentives to carry his commitment through to completion, by strengthening his fear of failure and his hope of success.

His heart will thus be released from the knot that has kept him tied to bad habits, so he will desist from the regular practice of unlawful activities, and he will tighten the reins to prevent his lower self *[nafs]* from pursuing the desires of the flesh. As well as renouncing his sinful conduct for the immediate present, he will confirm and strengthen his determination to avoiding any repetition of it in the future.

(d) The fact that he is ready to face death, filled with remorse, seeking forgiveness for the sins he has committed in the past, and striving to obey his Lord.

2. The signs that indicate that the penitent has had his repentance accepted are also said to be four in number:

(a) The fact that he has severed all connection with immoral companions *[aṣḥāb al-fisq]*, since he now has too much self-respect to go on seeing them, and has taken instead to mingling with the righteous *[ṣāliḥīn]*.

(b) The fact that he has lost all interest in sin, and is now devoting all his energy to acts of worshipful obedience.

(c) The fact that the joy of this world has departed from his heart, and it is obvious that the sorrow of the hereafter is always in his heart.

(d) The fact that he sees no need to concern himself with that which Allāh has guaranteed to him, namely, his means of sustenance *[rizq]*, and he is therefore wholly devoted to the obedient fulfillment of whatever Allāh commands him to perform.

If these four signs are present in him, the penitent must surely be one of those of whom Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> Truly Allāh loves those who turn to Him repentant, and He loves those who keep themselves in purity. (2:222)

3. As for the obligations owed to the penitent by other people, these are also four in number:

(a) They must come to love him, because Allāh (Exalted is He) already loves him.

(b) They must support him with their prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*, beseeching Allāh to keep him steadfast in repentance.

(c) They must not reproach him for the sins he has committed in the past, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If someone reproaches a believer *[mu'min]* for a vile misdeed *[fāḥisha]*, he is [thereby offering himself as] an expiation for it, and Allāh (Exalted is He) is bound to make him commit that same offense himself. If someone reproaches a believer for a crime *[jarīra]*, he will not leave this world until he has committed it himself, and been disgraced because of it.

Besides, the believer does not fall into sin deliberately and on purpose, or because he is convinced that it is required of him as a religious duty! It only happens because of the enticement of the devil *[shaiṭān]*, the excessive ferocity of passionate desire, the intensity of lust, and the cumulative effect of negligence and heedlessness. Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

> And He has made unbelief and iniquity and disobedience detestable to you. (49:7)

In other words, He has informed us that He has made sinful disobedience hateful to the believers, so it cannot be permissible to reproach a believer for disobedience when he has repented *[tāba]* and returned to obedience *[anāba]*. Far from reproaching the penitent, his fellow believers should offer prayers on his behalf, pleading for his repentance to be confirmed, and for him to be granted support and protection.

(d) They should spend time in his company, enter into conversation with him, and single him out for special attention.

4. Allāh (Exalted is He) will also honor the penitent with four noble favors:

(a) He will rid him of every trace of sin, as if he had never sinned at all.

(b) Allāh (Exalted is He) will love him.

(c) He will protect him from Satan, who will not be allowed to have power over him.

(d) He will grant him security from fear, even before He removes him from this world, because He has said (Exalted is He):

> The angels descend upon them, saying: "Do not fear and do not grieve, but hear good tidings of the Garden [of Paradise] that you have been promised." (41:30)

Some sayings of the Shaikhs of the Spiritual Path *[Shuyūkh aṭ-Ṭarīqa]* on the subject of repentance *[tawba]*.

It was Abū 'Alī ad-Daqqāq[280] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Repentance has three parts or stages: *Tawba*, which is an initial stage; *ināba*, which is an intermediate stage; and *awba*, which is an ultimate stage. The term *tawba* applies to the repentance of one who repents because of the fear of punishment. The term *ināba* applies to the repentance of one who is motivated by the desire for reward or the dreadful prospect of chastisement. The term *awba* applies to the repentance of one who repents in deference to the Divine commandment, not because of the desire for reward or the fear of chastisement."

Some maintain that *tawba* is the appropriate term for the repentance of ordinary believers *[mu'minīn]*, since Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> And repent unto Allāh all together, O believers, for then you may be able to succeed. (24:31)[281]

They maintain that *ināba* is the appropriate term for the repentance of the saints *[awliyā']* who are drawn close [to the Lord], citing the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> [Those who fear the All-Merciful in secret] and come with a penitently turning heart. (50:33)[282]

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[280] Abū 'Alī ad-Daqqāq (d. 1016 C.E.) was the founder of a spiritual center in Nishapur, called Khānaqāh-i Sarāwī. One of his pupils, Abū Sa'īd ibn Abi 'l-Khair of Maihana in Khurāsān, was a man of great saintliness who met and corresponded with the master-philosopher Avicenna [Ibn Sīnā]. Another was Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Qushairī, the author of an important and frequently quoted treatise entitled ar-Risālat al-Qushairiyya.

[281] *wa tūbū ila'llāhi jamī'an ayyuha'l-mu'minūna la'allakum tufliḥūn.* The Arabic word *tūbū* ("repent") is an imperative form of the verb *tāba*, which is derived from the same triliteral root—*t–w–b*—as the noun *tawba* ("repentance").

[282] *[man khashiya'r-Raḥmāna bi'l-ghaibi] wa jā'a bi-qalbin munīb.* The word *munīb* ("penitently turning") is a participial adjective, from the same triliteral root—*n–w–b*—as the verbal noun *ināba* ("the act of turning [in repentance]").

As for *awba*, they maintain that this is the appropriate term for the repentance of the Prophets *[anbiyā']* and Messengers *[rusul]*, on the basis of their interpretation of the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> An excellent servant indeed [was the Prophet Job], for he was ever returning [in repentance to his Lord]! (38:44)[283]

According to al-Junaid[284] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "Repentance *[tauba]* has three significant requirements: The penitent must feel remorse. He must make a firm resolution to refrain from any future lapse into conduct forbidden by Allāh. He must make a strenuous effort to compensate for all the wrongs he has committed."

"Repentance *[tauba]*," said Sahl ibn 'Abdi'llāh [at-Tustarī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), "means abstaining from procrastination *[taswīf]*."[285]

Al-Junaid said: "I once heard al-Ḥārith [al-Muhāsibī] say: 'I never say: "O Allāh, I beg You to grant me repentance." What I say instead is: "I beg You to grant me the appetite for repentance."'"

Al-Junaid also said: "I entered the presence of Sarī [as-Saqatī][286] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) one day, and I noticed that a change had come over him, so I said to him: 'What is the matter with you?' To this he replied: 'A young man came to visit me, and he asked me about repentance *[tauba]*, so I said to him: "It means that you must not forget

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[283] *ni'ma'l-'abd: innahu awwāb.* The Arabic word *awwāb* ("ever returning") is an intensive adjective, or adjectival noun, derived from the same triliteral root—'-w-b—as the verbal noun *awba* ("the act of returning [in repentance]").

[284] Abu'l-Qāsim ibn Muhammad ibn al-Junaid al-Khazzāz al-Qawārīrī an-Nihāwandī (d. A.H. 298/910 C.E.). The son of a glass merchant and nephew of Sarī as-Saqatī, he was a close associate of al-Muhāsibī. Renowned for the clarity of his perception and the firmness of his self-control, he earned a reputation as the principal exponent of the "sober" school of Islāmic mysticism. His *Rasā'il* [Epistles] consist of letters to private individuals, and short tractates on mystical themes, some cast in the form of commentaries on Qur'ānic texts.

[285] The Arabic verbal noun *taswīf* is derived from the particle *sawfa*, which is prefixed to a verb in order to emphasize that the action concerned will not take place until some time in the future. Sahl ibn 'Abdi'llāh at-Tustarī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was no doubt aware of the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Doomed to perdition are the procrastinators *[musawwifūn]*, the people who keep saying: "We are going to repent *[sawfa natūbu]*."

[286] Abu'l-Ḥasan Sarī ibn al-Mughallis as-Saqatī was the uncle and teacher of Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy on them both). Having begun his career in Baghdād as a dealer in secondhand goods, he became a pupil of Ma'rūf al-Karkhī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). He died in A.H. 253/867 C.E., at the age of 98.

According to another thesis of theirs, Allāh (Exalted is He) is reciting upon the tongue of every reciter of the Qur'ān *[yaqra'u 'alā lisāni kulli qāri']*, and that when people are listening to the Qur'ān as it is being read by a reciter, they are actually hearing it from Allāh. To make such an assertion is to come perilously close to professing [the heretical doctrine of] *ḥulūl* [hylomorphism or incarnation].[129] We take refuge with Allāh from that kind of error. If followed through to its logical consequence, it would amount to asserting that Allāh (Exalted is He) could be guilty of making grammatical mistakes and of mispronouncing the Arabic words of the text [as many unskilled reciters obviously do while they are reading the Qur'ān]. This would be nothing short of unbelief *[kufr]*.

The Sālimiyya also profess the doctrine that Allāh (Exalted is He) is in every place, and that there is no distinction to be drawn between the Throne *['Arsh]* and other places. Here again, the evidence to refute their falsehood is to be found in the Qur'ān itself, where Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> The All-Merciful has firmly established Himself upon the Throne *[ar-Raḥmānu 'ala'l-'arshi'stawā]*. (20:5)

There is no statement to the effect that He has firmly established Himself upon the earth *['ala'l-arḍi'stawā]*, nor on the bellies of the mountains *['ala buṭūni'l-jibāl]* and other places besides these.

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[129] The philosophical term *ḥulūl* is derived from the Arabic verb *ḥalla*, meaning "to loosen, unfold, alight, settle in a place *[maḥall]*." As a technical term of classical Islamic theology, it came to be applied to the relation between a body and its location, or between an accident and its substance. The expression *ḥulūl ar-rūḥ fi'l-badan* has been applied to the substantial union of the body and the soul, and *ḥulūl al-'aql al-fa''āl fi'l-insān* to the substantial union of a divine spirit with man.

> over those who believe and put all their trust in their Lord *['ala'lladhīna āmanū wa 'alā Rabbihim yatawakkalūn]*. (16:99)

—in other words, those who place their full confidence in Allāh.

> His authority *[innamā sulṭānuhu]*

—meaning his power of control *[mulk]*—

> is only over those who take him for their friend *['ala'lladhīna yatawallawnahu]*

—that is to say, those who take Iblīs the damned for their friend, so that they follow him in what he commands, and thus he leads them astray from their religion, from Islām—

> and those who ascribe partners to Him *[wa'lladhīna hum bihi mushrikūn]* (16:100)

—that is to say, those who ascribe partners to Allāh on Satan's behalf.

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According to Ibn ʿAṭāʾ[290] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "Repentance is actually two kinds of repentance *[at-tawba tawbatān]*. There is repentance as a return to obedience *[tawbat al-ināba]*, but there is also repentance as a positive response *[tawbat al-istijāba]*. Repentance as a return to obedience means that the servant repents [to his Lord] for fear of incurring His punishment, while repentance as a positive response means that he repents in respectful acknowledgment of His noble generosity.

Yaḥyā ibn Muʿādh ar-Rāzī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "A single lapse after repentance is far worse than seventy before it."

The following story was told by Abū ʿAmr al-Anṭākī[291] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him):

"ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā, the Vizier, came riding [through the streets of Baghdād] in a magnificent ceremonial parade, and some women from out of town started asking: 'Who is this?' A local woman, who happened to be standing by the side of the road, then turned to them and said: 'How long will you go on asking who this is? This is a servant who has fallen from favor in the sight of Allāh, which explains why Allāh has afflicted him with the tribulation you are witnessing at this very moment.' When ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā overheard this remark, he immediately turned around, went back to his official residence, and tendered his resignation from the office of Vizier. He then moved away to Mecca and settled in one of its outlying districts."

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[290] Abu'l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Sahl ibn ʿAṭāʾ al-Ādamī was a close companion of al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them both). Author of mystical verses and a prominent member of the Baghdād circle, he was put to death in A.H. 309/922 C.E.

[291] Abū ʿAmr al-Anṭākī is a saintly figure from around the time of al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them).

The Fourth Discourse

Concerning the words of Allāh (Exalted is He): Surely the noblest among you in the sight of Allāh is the one of you who is most truly devout. (49:13) *[inna akrama-kum ʿinda 'llāhi atqā-kum]*.

The learned scholars *[ʿulamā']* hold a variety of different opinions concerning the meaning of the term *taqwā* [true devotion] and the real nature *[ḥaqīqa]* of the *muttaqī* [truly devout person]. Their views are based on the following traditional report, according to which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The whole of true devotion *[taqwā]* is contained within this statement of His (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Surely Allāh commands	*inna 'llāha ya'muru*
the implementation of justice,	*bi-'l-ʿadli wa 'l-iḥsāni wa ītā'i*
and charitable conduct,	*dhi 'l-qurbā: wa yanhā*
and giving to close relatives;	*ʿani 'l-faḥshā'i*
and He forbids indecency,	*wa 'l-munkari wa 'l-baghy:*
unfairness, and outrageous behavior.	*wa yaʿiẓu-kum*
He appeals to your consciences,	*laʿalla-kum tadhakkarūn.*
in order that you may take heed. (16:90)	

According to Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father): "The truly devout person *[muttaqī]* is one who is always on his guard *[yattaqī]* against associating partners with Allāh *[shirk]*, committing the major sins *[kabā'ir]*, and being guilty of abominations and atrocities *[fawāḥish]*."

According to Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father): "True devotion *[taqwā]* means that you do not regard yourself as better than anyone else."

According to al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī][292] (may Allāh bestow His mercy

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[292] See note 227 on p. 163 above.

As for *awba*, they maintain that this is the appropriate term for the repentance of the Prophets *[anbiyā']* and Messengers *[rusul]*, on the basis of their interpretation of the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> An excellent servant indeed [was the Prophet Job], for he was ever returning [in repentance to his Lord]! (38:44)[283]

According to al-Junaid[284] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "Repentance *[tauba]* has three significant requirements: The penitent must feel remorse. He must make a firm resolution to refrain from any future lapse into conduct forbidden by Allāh. He must make a strenuous effort to compensate for all the wrongs he has committed."

"Repentance *[tauba]*," said Sahl ibn 'Abdi'llāh [at-Tustarī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), "means abstaining from procrastination *[taswīf]*."[285]

Al-Junaid said: "I once heard al-Ḥārith [al-Muḥāsibī] say: 'I never say: "O Allāh, I beg You to grant me repentance." What I say instead is: "I beg You to grant me the appetite for repentance."'"

Al-Junaid also said: "I entered the presence of Sarī [as-Saqaṭī][286] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) one day, and I noticed that a change had come over him, so I said to him: 'What is the matter with you?' To this he replied: 'A young man came to visit me, and he asked me about repentance *[tauba]*, so I said to him: "It means that you must not forget

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[283] *ni'ma'l-'abd, innahu awwāb.* The Arabic word *awwāb* ("ever returning") is an intensive adjective, or adjectival noun, derived from the same triliteral root—*'-w-b*—as the verbal noun *awba* ("the act of returning [in repentance]").

[284] Abu'l-Qāsim ibn Muhammad ibn al-Junaid al-Khazzāz al-Qawārīrī an-Nihāwandī (d. A.H. 298/910 C.E.). The son of a glass merchant and nephew of Sarī as-Saqaṭī, he was a close associate of al-Muḥāsibī. Renowned for the clarity of his perception and the firmness of his self-control, he earned a reputation as the principal exponent of the "sober" school of Islāmic mysticism. His *Rasā'il* [Epistles] consist of letters to private individuals, and short tractates on mystical themes, some cast in the form of commentaries on Qur'ānic texts.

[285] The Arabic verbal noun *taswīf* is derived from the particle *sawfa*, which is prefixed to a verb in order to emphasize that the action concerned will not take place until some time in the future. Sahl ibn 'Abdi'llāh at-Tustarī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was no doubt aware of the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Doomed to perdition are the procrastinators *[musawwifūn]*, the people who keep saying: "We are going to repent *[sawfa natūbu]*."

[286] Abu'l-Ḥasan Sarī ibn al-Mughallis as-Saqaṭī was the uncle and teacher of Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy on them both). Having begun his career in Baghdād as a dealer in secondhand goods, he became a pupil of Ma'rūf al-Karkhī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). He died in A.H. 253/867 C.E., at the age of 98.

Somebody once said to Ṭaliq ibn Ḥabīb: "Give us a concise definition of true devotion *[taqwā]*," so he responded by saying: "True devotion *[taqwā]* is acting in obedience to Allāh, in accordance with a light from Allāh, for the sake of Allāh's reward, and with a sense of shame in the presence of Allāh."

"True devotion *[taqwā]*," it has also been said, "is giving up disobedience to Allāh, in accordance with a light from Allāh, and in fear of Allāh's chastisement."

In the words of Bakr ibn ʿUbaidi'llāh (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "A man cannot be truly pious *[taqī]*[296] until he has come to be pious in the way he approaches the dining room *[taqiyyu 'l-maṭʿam]*, and pious in the way he deals with anger *[taqiyyu 'l-ghaḍab]*."

To quote another of the sayings of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "The truly devout person *[muttaqī]* is subject to as much restraint as the woman who is confined to the harem *[maḥram al-ḥaram]*."

According to Shahr ibn Ḥawshab (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "The truly devout person *[muttaqī]* is one who is ready to abstain from something that is quite harmless in itself, as a precaution against slipping over into something else that could be harmful."

Sufyān ath-Thawrī[297] and al-Fuḍail [ibn ʿIyāḍ][298] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them) both said [concerning the truly devout person]: "He is someone who loves other people to receive what he loves to receive for himself."

Al-Junaid[299] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) went further than this, however, for he said:

"The truly devout person *[muttaqī]* is not someone who loves other people to receive what he loves to receive for himself. The truly devout person *[muttaqī]* is actually one who loves other people to receive more than what he loves to receive for himself. Do you know what happened to my master and teacher *[ustādhī]*, Sarī as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him)?[300] One day, as I recall the occasion, a friend of his greeted him with 'Peace be upon you!' He promptly returned his friend's greeting, but wearing a frown as he did so, and without giving the man a cheerful smile. When I mentioned to him that I was rather puzzled by this odd behavior, he said: "According to the information I have received, when a Muslim man greets his brother with the Islāmic salutation, and his brother then returns his greeting, a hundred merciful blessings *[mi'a raḥma]* are shared out between the pair—ninety of them going to the more cheerful of the two, and ten to the other. So, I wanted to make sure that he would be the one to get ninety."

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[296] The Arabic adjective or adjectival noun *taqī* is virtually synonymous with the participial form *muttaqin* (pronounced *muttaqī* when the definite article *al-* is prefixed to it).

[297] See note 238 on p. 168 above.

[298] See note 270 on p. 191 above.

[299] See note 284 on p. 205 above.

[300] See note 286 on p. 205 above.

It was Muḥammad ibn 'Alī at-Tirmidhī[501] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said [concerning the truly devout person]: "He is someone who has no hostile adversary *[khaṣm]*."

According to Sarī as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "He [the truly devout person] is someone who hates his own lower self *[nafs]*."

According to ash-Shiblī[502] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "He [the truly devout person] is someone who is not wary *[lā yattaqī]* of anything less than Allāh."

In the words of the anonymous but truthful speaker: "Everything, with the sole exception of Allāh, is simply vain and futile *[bāṭil]*."

According to Muḥammad ibn Khafīf (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "True devotion *[taqwā]* is the scrupulous avoidance of everything that would keep you at a distance from Allāh."

According to al-Qāsim ibn al-Qāsim (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), it is: "Faithful adherence to the modes of conduct prescribed by the Sacred Law *[ādāb ash-Sharī'a]*."

According to [Sufyān] ath-Thawrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the truly devout person *[muttaqī]* is: "He who is ever on his guard *[yattaqī]* against this world and its perils."

[501] It seems reasonable to assume that this is "Tirmidhī the Wise" [al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmidhī] (d. ca. A.H. 295/908 C.E.), a contemporary of al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them both). According to Trimingham, he was the first within an Islāmic context to write about the Logos, for which he uses the word *Dhikr*, but his ideas fell into oblivion until resurrected by the genius of Ibn al-'Arabī. (See: J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*. Oxford University Press, 1971; pp. 4, 134 and 161.)

[502] Abū Bakr ibn Jaḥdar ash-Shiblī was of Khurāsānian origin, although born in Baghdād or Sāmarrā. The son of a court official, he rose through the ranks of the imperial service. While in Baghdād for the occasion of his investiture as Governor of Demavend, he experienced conversion. He joined the circle of al-Junaid, played a leading part in the stormy history of al-Ḥallāj, and was committed to an asylum on account of his eccentric behavior. He died in A.H. 334/946 C.E. at the age of 87. (See: A.J. Arberry, *Muslim Saints and Mystics*. London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966; pp.277-286.)

Throne on high. Here am I, engaged in something so unlawful *[ḥarām]* that all my good work has come to nothing!" His heart was stricken with dread. He began to tremble all over, and a change became noticeable in the color of his skin.

The woman looked at him and saw that he was changing color, so she said to him: "What has come over you, man?" He replied: "I am afraid of Allāh, of my Lord, so please permit me to leave." She then said to him: "Woe unto you! Many people would dearly love to experience the pleasure you have found, so what can this be that has such a weird effect upon you?" All he could say to this was: "I am really afraid of Allāh (Glorious is He, to Whom all praise is due!), and as for the money I paid to your agent, you may treat it as rightfully yours, so please permit me to leave!"

The woman responded to this by saying: "It seems as though you have never done this kind of thing before." When he said: "No, indeed I have not," she asked him: "Where are you from, and what is your name?" So he told her that he came from the village called such and such, and that his own name was so and so. At this point she finally permitted him to take his leave of her, so off he went, wailing and lamenting and weeping over himself.

As for the woman, her heart was suddenly stricken with a sense of awe, inspired by her experience with that pious worshipper, so she said inwardly to herself: "This man was committing the very first sin he had ever committed, and yet he was invaded by a fear of such intensity, while I have been sinning since the year dot. But the fact is that the Lord he fears is also my Lord, which means that my fear ought to be even more intense than his fear."

She thereupon repented to Allāh (Exalted is He), locked her door to shut people out, dressed in rags and tatters, and turned in the direction of worshipful service *['ibāda]*. She came to be in her worship what Allāh (Exalted is He) wished her to be, so she said inwardly to herself: "If only I could meet up with that man again, perhaps he would marry me. Then I could be with him and learn all about my religion *[dīn]* from him, and he would be a great help to me in the worshipful service of my Lord."

She therefore equipped herself to undertake a journey, carrying with her as many goods and servants as Allāh willed, and so it was that she degree of trust [in the Lord] [*tawakkul*] in relation to what he has not yet accomplished; an admirable degree of satisfaction [*riḍā*] with what he has already achieved, and an admirable degree of patience [*ṣabr*] in accepting irrevocable loss."

As another saying has it: "The truly devout person [*muttaqī*] is someone who is warily on guard [*yattaqī*] against following the dictates of his passions [*hawā*]."

It was Mālik [ibn Dīnār][306] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Wahb ibn Kaisān informed me that one of the legal scholars [*fuqahā'*] among the people of Medina once wrote to 'Abdu'llāh ibn az-Zubair[307] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father): 'The people of true devotion [*ahl at-taqwā*] bear certain distinctive characteristics, by which you can identify them, namely: patience in the face of trial and tribulation [*balā'*]; cheerful acceptance of destiny's decree [*qaḍā'*]; gratitude in the presence of gracious favor [*na'mā'*]; and humble compliance with the laws of the Qur'ān.'"

According to Maimūn ibn Mihrān (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "A man will not be truly pious [*taqī*] until he has come to be far more rigorous, in calling himself to account, than any tightfisted business partner [*sharīk shaḥīḥ*] or even a despotic ruler [*sulṭān jā'ir*] would ever be."

According to Abū Turāb (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "Arrayed in front of true devotion [*taqwā*] are five steep obstacles, which must be surmounted by anyone seeking to acquire it, namely: (1) the choice of severity and hardship instead of ease and comfort; (2) the choice of stalwart courage instead of meddling curiosity; (3) the choice of self-abasement instead of self-aggrandizement; (4) the choice of stern endeavor instead of recreation and leisure; and (5) the choice of death instead of life."

In the words of one of the wise: "A man cannot reach the highest level of true devotion [*taqwā*] unless he has come to the point where, if

throne would be mounted on four pillars of gold, then she would take her seat upon it, in a position from which she could see the people without their being able to see her.

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[306] See note 246 on p. 170 above.

[307] Az-Zubair ibn al-'Awwām (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was a cousin of the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace), and one of the earliest believers. As one of the Ten Well-Betided Ones [*al-'Ashara al-Mubashshara*], he received the assurance of Paradise from the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace). He died in A.H. 36/656 C.E. One of his sons—the 'Abdu'llāh ibn az-Zubair to whom this note refers—led a revolt against the tyranny of Umayyad rule, declared himself Caliph, and seized control of Mecca before being finally defeated and slain in A.H. 73/692 C.E.

If any man wished to apply to her for help with some problem or matter of business, he could present her with his request. In order to do so, he had to stand there in her presence, showing respect for her by keeping his head bowed low and not looking in her direction, then by prostrating himself without raising his head, until she gave him permission to speak. When she had dealt with their concerns and delivered her instructions, she would withdraw into her palace, and they would not see her again until the same day of the following week.

Her authority was a mighty authority indeed, so when the hoopoe arrived with the letter, he found that all the gates and doors had been locked to ensure her privacy, while the guards were on duty all around the castle, patrolling the entire perimeter. In the face of these formidable obstacles, he nevertheless kept searching for some way of getting through to Queen Bilqīs, until he finally succeeded—through a skylight in the roof of the palace.

Once he had discovered this opening, he went from one royal suite to the next, until he finally came to the far end of seven suites, where her throne towered thirty cubits high. It was there that he saw her, lying sound asleep upon her throne. She was wearing nothing at all, except for a piece of cloth to cover her most private part [*'awra*], this being her usual habit whenever she lay down to sleep. He therefore placed the letter beside her on the elevated couch, then flew up and perched in a skylight, expecting that she would soon wake up from her slumber and read the letter.

As it turned out, however, he stayed there waiting for a very long time, while she was still not showing any sign of waking up. The moment came when he could tolerate no further delay, so he swooped down and pecked her. She came to her senses immediately, and the first thing she caught sight of was the letter, lying right there beside her on the couch. She picked it up, rubbed her eyes, and started to examine the condition of the letter. How could such a letter have reached her anyway, she wondered, what with the doors all locked....

She went outside to check, and finding that the guards were still on

Allāh be well pleased with him) say: "When someone asked [the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)]: 'O Muḥammad, who belongs to the family of Muhammad?' he replied: 'Everyone who is truly devout *[taqī]*, for true devotion *[taqwā]* is the repository of all the virtues *[jimā' al-khairāt]*.'"

The real meaning of prudent conduct *[ḥaqīqat al-ittiqā']* is taking precautions *[taḥarruz]*, through obedience to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), in order to guard oneself against His punishment. [In a military context] one might use the expression: "So-and-so took the prudent measure of raising his shield *[ittaqā fulān bi-tursi-hi]*." The essential ingredient of true devotion *[aṣl at-taqwā]* is the taking of prudent measures against associating partners with Allāh *[ittiqā' ash-shirk]*. Next after that comes the taking of prudent measures against sinful acts of disobedience and things that are unmistakably bad *[ittiqā' al-ma'āṣī wa 's-sayyi'āt]*. Next after that comes the taking of prudent measures against things that are merely of dubious legality *[ittiqā' ash-shubuhāt]*. Then, as the next priority, one must also abstain from excessive indulgence in things that are otherwise lawful and good *[faḍalāt]*.

Let us now consider the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

O you who believe, observe	*yā ayyuha 'llādhīna*
your duty to Allāh, with the devotion	*āmanu 'ttaqu 'llāha*
that is truly due to Him. (3:102)	*ḥaqqa tuqāti-hi.*

According to the traditional Qur'ānic interpretation *[tafsīr]*, this means that the believer must obey, for then he will not disobey; that he must remember, for then he will not forget; and that he must be thankful, for then he will not be guilty of ingratitude.

It was Sahl ibn 'Abdi'llāh [at-Tustarī][912] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "There is no helper except Allāh *[lā mu'īn illa 'llāh]*. There is no guide except the Messenger of Allāh *[lā dalīl illā Rasūli 'llāh]*. There is no provision for the journey except true devotion *[lā zād illa 't-taqwā]*, and there is no proper course of action except patience in the practice thereof *[lā 'amal illa 'ṣ-ṣabr 'alai-hā]*."

According to al-Kinānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "The things of this world are allocated on the basis of probationary trial *['ala 'l-balwā]*, while the blessings of the Garden of Paradise are allocated on the basis of true devotion *['ala 't-taqwā]*. If someone fails to establish a strong bond of true devotion *[taqwā]* and dutiful reverence *[murāqaba]* between himself and Allāh, that person will never attain to revelatory disclosure *[kashf]* and direct witnessing *[mushāhada]*."

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[912] See note 251 on p. 172 above.

According to [Abū 'l-Qāsim] an-Nasrābādhī[313] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "What true devotion *[taqwā]* signifies is that the servant [of the Lord] must always be on his guard *[yattaqī]* against everything apart from Him (Exalted is He)."

To quote another of the sayings of Sahl [ibn 'Abdi'llāh at-Tustarī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "If a person wishes to be credited with true devotion *[taqwā]*, he must give up committing sins—all sins whatsoever."

[Abū 'l-Qāsim] an-Naṣrābādhī also said: "When someone makes true devotion *[taqwā]* his constant practice, he comes to feel an ardent longing to part company with this world, because Allāh (Exalted is He) tells us:

The abode of the Hereafter is surely far better for those who practice dutiful devotion. (6:32)"	*wa la-'d-dāru 'l-ākhiratu khairun li'lladhīna yattaqūn.*

In the words of one of the wise: "If a person is really committed to true devotion *[taqwā]*, Allāh will make it easy for his heart to lose interest in this world."

According to Abū 'Abdi'llāh ar-Rūzbārī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "True devotion *[taqwā]* is the scrupulous avoidance of everything that would keep you at a distance from Allāh."[314]

According to Dhu 'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī ["the Egyptian"] [315] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "The truly pious believer *[taqī]* is one who contaminates neither his outer being *[ẓāhir]* with acts of stubborn defiance, nor his inner being *[bāṭin]* with negligent lapses into heedlessness, and who adopts an attitude of harmonious conformity *[ittifāq]* in his relationship with Allāh (Exalted is He)."

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[313] According to al-Qushairī, Abū 'l-Qāsim Ibrāhīm an-Nasrābādhī (d. A.H. 369/979 C.E.) is the link in the *silsila* [chain of spiritual transmission] between his own Shaikh, Abū 'Alī ad-Daqqāq (d. A.H. 407/1016 C.E.) and Abū Bakr ibn Jaḥdar ash-Shiblī (d. A.H. 334/945–6 C.E.) (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them all). The spelling of the name is sometimes given as Naṣrābādī, rather than Nasrābādhī. (See: Trimingham, op. cit., p. 261).

[314] Since this definition of true devotion *[taqwā]* is precisely identical with the one attributed earlier in this Discourse (p. 213 above) to a certain Muhammad ibn Khafīf (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), it may be that Abū 'Abdi'llāh ar-Rūzbārī is another part of that same person's name.

[315] See note 163 on p. 115 above.

According to Ibn ʿAṭiyya [ad-Dārānī][316] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "The truly devout person *[muttaqī]* has an external aspect *[ẓāhir]* and an internal aspect *[bāṭin]*. His external aspect is careful observance of the rules *[muḥāfaẓat al-ḥudūd]*, while his internal aspect is right intention *[niyya]* and sincerity *[ikhlāṣ]*."

Dhu'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) also said: "There is no life worth living, except in the company of men whose hearts are always yearning for true devotion *[taqwā]*, and finding recreation in remembrance *[dhikr]*."

It was Abū Ḥafṣ [al-Ḥaddād][317] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "True devotion *[taqwā]* relates to that which is absolutely lawful *[halāl maḥḍ]*—not to anything else."

According to Abu 'l-Ḥusain az-Zanjānī (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "When a person's capital consists of true devotion *[taqwā]*, tongues grow weary in attempting to describe his profit."

According to al-Wāsiṭī (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "What true devotion *[taqwā]* requires is that a person should be wary of his own piety *[an yattaqiya min taqwā]*," meaning, "of attaching undue importance to his own piety."

It is related that Ibn Sīrīn[318] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) once purchased forty jars of clarified butter. He noticed that his servant had pulled a mouse out of one of the jars, so he asked him: "From which of the jars did you remove that mouse?" "I don't know," said the servant—so Ibn Sīrīn proceeded to empty the whole lot down the drain.

We have it on good authority that one of the Imāms would never sit in the shade of a tree belonging to someone who owed him a debt. He used to say: "According to the traditional report *[khabar]*:[319]

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[316] See note 235 on p. 167 above.

[317] Abū Ḥafṣ ʿAmr ibn Salma al-Ḥaddād (d. A.H. 270/883 C.E.) is looked upon as one of the founding fathers of the Nishāpūrī school of Islamic mysticism, which is sometimes referred to as the *malāmatī* tendency. (See: Trimingham, op. cit., p. 265.)

[318] The name of Muhammad Ibn Sīrīn is often mentioned alongside that of his contemporary, Anas ibn Mālik, who died in A.H. 91–93 (see note 265 on p. 188 above). Both are revered as reliable and prolific narrators of Prophetic tradition (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

> Any loan that entails a benefit [to the lender] is a form of usury *[ribā]*."[320]

It is said that Abū Yazīd [al-Bisṭāmī][321] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) once washed an article of clothing in the presence of a companion of his, while they were out in the desert together. His companion then said: "Let us hang our clothes to dry on the walls of the vineyards," but Abū Yazīd rejected the suggestion, saying: "We must not stick pegs into people's walls!" The following exchanges then took place between the two:

"Let us hang them on the trees," said the companion.

"No," replied Abū Yazīd, "because they will cause the branches to snap."

"Well then," said the companion, "how about spreading them over the little bushes that grow around here?"

"No," Abū Yazīd objected once again. "Those little bushes serve as fodder for the riding animals, so we must not hide them from their sight."

Abū Yazīd then turned his back toward the sun, draped the wet shirt over his back, and stood quite still until one side of it had dried out. Then he turned it over and waited until the other side had dried out too.

Ibrāhīm ibn Ad'ham[322] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "I once spent the night beneath the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. At some point during the night, two angels came down, and one of them said to his companion: 'Who is this person here?' The second angel told him: 'Ibrāhīm ibn Ad'ham,'

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[319] See note 176 on p. 130 above.

[320] The Arabic term *ribā* [usury, unjustified profit] is derived from the same triconsonantal root—*r–b–w*—as a verb meaning "to grow, to increase." As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us in the Qur'ān:

That which you give in usury,	*wa mā ātaitum min ribā*
so that it may grow	*li-yarbuwa*
on other people's wealth,	*fī amwāli 'n-nāsi*
does not grow at all with Allāh. (30:39)	*fa-lā yarbū 'inda 'llāh*

In the Fortieth Discourse of *Jalā' al-Khawāṭir [The Removal of Cares]*, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) issues this stern warning on the subject:

> You must not get anywhere close to transactions in which usurious interest *[ribā]* is involved, for that would amount to waging war against your Lord, and would result in the removal of blessed grace *[baraka]* from your material resources. When you make a loan, the terms of repayment should be exactly one dīnār [gold coin] for one dīnār.

[321] See note 249 on p. 171 above.

[322] See note 233 on p. 165 above.

so he said: 'That is the man whom Allāh has demoted by one degree of spiritual rank.' When his companion asked why this had happened, the angel explained: 'Because he bought some pieces of fruit in al-Baṣra, and an extra piece of the greengrocer's fruit fell on top of the pieces he had paid for.'"

Ibrāhīm then went on to say: "So I traveled back to al-Baṣra, bought some pieces of fruit from that same man, dropped one of those pieces on top of his stack of fruit, returned to Jerusalem, and went to sleep beneath the Dome of the Rock. At a certain point during the night, I suddenly became aware that two angels had descended from heaven above. One of them asked his companion: 'Who is this person here?' The second angel told him: 'Ibrāhīm ibn Ad'ham,' so he said: 'That is the man who put something back in its rightful place, and was therefore awarded a promotion in spiritual rank!'"

Concerning the standards by which true devotion *[taqwā]* is assessed at various levels of spiritual stature.

According to the view maintained by some authorities, there can be no single, all-purpose definition of true devotion *[taqwā]*, since a different standard must be applied to each of the following categories:

1. In the case of ordinary mass of people *[al-‘āmma]*, the mark of true devotion *[taqwā]* is the renunciation of attributing partners to the Creator *[shirk bi-’l-Khāliq]*.

2. In the case of the spiritual élite *[al-khāssa]*, it is detachment from the influence of the passions *[hawā]*, through the renunciation of acts of sinful disobedience *[ma‘āṣī]*, and through opposition to the lower self *[nafs]* in all conditions and circumstances.

3. In the case of the élite of the spiritual élite *[khāṣṣ al-khāss]*—the category to which the saints *[awliyā’]* belong—it is the renunciation of self-will *[irāda]* in relation to all things, of exclusive concentration *[tajarrud]* on supererogatory acts of worship *[nawāfil al-‘ibādāt]*, of dependence on secondary causes *[asbāb]*, of reliance on anything apart from the Master *[Maulā]*, and of clinging to any particular spiritual state *[ḥāl]* or station *[maqām]*. In all these areas, true devotion *[taqwā]* at this level requires compliance with the directly received command *[imtithāl al-amr]*, together with observance of the rules that apply to strictly obligatory religious duties *[aḥkām al-farā’iḍ]*.

4. As for the Prophets *[Anbiyā’]* (blessings and peace be upon them), whatever constitutes true devotion *[taqwā]* in their case, it is a virtue peculiar to them alone. It is a mystery within a mystery *[ghaib fī ghaib]*, for it is both from Allāh and directed toward Allāh. He tells them what they must do, and He tells them what they must not do. He helps them to succeed, and He subjects them to discipline. He improves their health, and He remedies their ailments. He addresses them in words,

asked by someone who saw him in a dream: "How has Allāh treated you?" "Very well," he replied, "except that I am barred from the Garden of Paradise, having been confronted with a heap of corn dust amounting to forty measures of grain."

As Jesus (peace be upon him) was passing by a cemetery, he called out to one of the men who lay buried there, whereupon Allāh (Exalted is He) promptly brought the man back to life. Jesus asked: "Who are you?" and he said: "I used to be a porter, carrying things for other people. One day, while I was carrying a load of wood for a certain person, I broke off a splinter and used it to pick my teeth. I have been paying the consequences ever since I died."

Concerning the course of progress by which the development of true devotion *[taqwā]* is ensured.

In order of priority, the necessary stages in the development of true devotion *[taqwā]* are as follows:

1. Discharging oneself of any guilt incurred through the commission of offenses against human beings *[maẓālim al-'ibād]*, and of any restitution due to them on account of the violation of their rights *[ḥuqūq]*.
2. Discharging oneself of any guilt incurred through the commission of sinful acts of disobedience, whether they be classed as major sins *[kabā'ir]* or merely as minor sins *[ṣaghā'ir]*.
3. Making a conscientious effort to abstain from committing the sins of the heart, for they are the mothers of all sins *[ummahāt adh-dhunūb]* and the root causes of them all. From them branch out the sins of the limbs and organs of the physical body, such as ostentatious display *[riyā']*, hypocrisy *[nifāq]*, vanity *['ujb]*, arrogant pride *[kibr]*, cupidity *[ḥirṣ]*, avarice *[ṭama']*, fearing one's fellow creatures and pinning one's hopes on them, the pursuit of privileged status *[jāh]*, and political leadership *[riyāsa]*, and the desire to take precedence over all other human beings [lit., over the children of one's own species]. Many more items could be added to this list, but it would take a very long time to account for them all. There is only one way to acquire the necessary strength for all of this, and that is through opposing the influence the passions *[hawā]*.
4. Making a conscientious effort to abstain from the exercise of self-will *[irāda]*. This means that a person must not make any personal choice in spite of Allāh, and that he must not pursue his own plans in spite of Allāh. It means that he must not expect Him to comply with his personal preferences, and that he must not try to stipulate a particular manner and means for the provision of His sustenance. It means that he must not remonstrate with Him (Almighty and Glorious

is He) over His way of dealing with His creation, but must rather surrender everything to Him, demonstrate obedient submission [*yastaslim*] before Him, and cast himself down in abject prostration in His presence. In the Hand of His Power, he will then come to be like the suckling infant in the hand of his wet-nurse [*ẓi'r*] and his midwife [*dāya*], or like the corpse in the hand of the man who performs the ritual washing of the dead [*ghāsil*]. He will be stripped of his freedom of choice [*ikhtiyār*], deprived of his power of self-will [*irāda*], for in this lies salvation [*najāt*]—the whole of salvation.

If someone should happen to ask: "How would you describe the path that leads to that destination?" he should be told: "The path to that destination is followed by being sincere in seeking refuge with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), by dedicating oneself to Him completely, by practicing constant obedience to Him—through compliance with His commandments and nonviolation of His prohibitions, by resigning oneself to acceptance of the destiny decreed by Him [*at-taslīm fī qadari-hi*], by keeping within the limits set by Him [*ḥifẓ ḥudūdi-hi*], and by maintaining this virtuous state of being, always and forever."

Concerning the differing views expressed by the Shaikhs on the subject of salvation *[najāt]*.

Certain differences of perspective are noticeable in the views expressed by the Shaikhs on the subject of salvation *[najāt]*. For instance, al-Junaid [324] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "There is no way for anyone to be saved, except by making an honest plea for refuge with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

And [Allāh also relented in mercy]	*wa 'ala 'th-thalāthati 'lladhīna*
toward the three who were	*khullifū:*
left behind, until the earth,	*ḥattā idhā ḍāqat*
became for all its vast expanse,	*'alai-himu 'l-arḍu*
too narrowly constricting for them,	*bi-mā rahubat*
and their own lower selves	*wa ḍāqat 'alai-him*
became too narrow for them,	*anfusu-hum*
until they supposed that there	*wa ẓannū*
could be no way to find refuge	*an lā malja'a*
from Allāh except by turning	*mina 'llāhi.*
toward Him. (9:118)"	*illā ilai-h.*

According to Ruwaim (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "There is no way for anyone to be saved, unless it be through honesty *[ṣidq]* and true devotion *[taqwā]*. As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

And Allāh delivers those	*wa yunajji 'llāhu 'lladhīna*
who have practiced true devotion	*taqaw*
in their temporary state of security.	*bi-mafāzati-him.*
(39:61)"	

According to al-Jazīrī (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "There is no way for anyone to be saved, except by paying due respect to the fulfillment of his contractual obligation. As Allāh

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[324] See note 284 on p. 205 above.

(Almighty and Glorious is He) has said [concerning those who shall gain access to the Ultimate Abode, and who shall enter the Gardens of Eden]:

[Such are] those who fulfill	*alladhīna yūfūna*
the covenant of Allāh,	*bi-'ahdi 'llāhi*
and do not break the compact.	*wa lā yanquḍūna 'l-mīthāq.*
(13:20)"	

According to 'Aṭā'[325] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "There is no way for anyone to be saved, except through experiencing a genuine sense of shame *[taḥqīq al-ḥayā']*. As Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Is he not aware	*a-lam ya'lam*
that Allāh sees? (96:14)"	*bi-anna 'llāha yarā.*

In the words of one of the wise: "There is no way for anyone to be saved, unless it be in accordance with the Divine verdict *[ḥukm]* and the judgment long ago established *[al-qaḍā' as-sābiq]* in the foreknowledge of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). As Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us [concerning those who will be far removed from the Fire of Hell]:

But as for those to whom	*inna 'lladhīna*
the reward most fair	*sabaqat*
has already gone forth from Us,	*la-hum min-na 'l-ḥusnā:*
they shall be kept far from it.	*ulā'ika 'an-hā mub'adūn.*
(21:101)	

It was al-Ḥasan al-Basrī [326] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said: ""There is no way for anyone to be saved, except by shunning this world and the people who are attached to it. As Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

The life of this world is nothing	*inna-ma 'l-ḥayātu 'd-dunyā*
but a sport and a pastime. (47:36)	*la'ibun wa lahw.*

Moreover, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The love of this world is the head of every sinful error, and, for those who draw near to Allāh, there is no finer means of drawing close than the performance of the religious duties prescribed by Allāh.

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[325] This is presumably 'Aṭā' as-Sulamī/as-Sulaimī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), a man renowned for his extreme piety. According to some accounts, his sense of shame before Allāh (Exalted is He) was so intense that he felt unable to raise his head toward heaven. He died in A.H. 121.

[326] See note 227 on p. 163 above.

He also said:

> Since Allāh (Exalted is He) created it [this world], He has not looked at it.”

Al-Ḥasan (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) then went on to explain: “This means that He has not looked at it with the eye of His mercy *[raḥma]*, because it so abhorrent. It therefore constitutes the mighty screen *[al-ḥijāb al-ʿaẓīm]*, and serves to distinguish that which is pure and wholesome from that which is faulty and defective. As long as someone is still tainted by the slightest thing belonging to it, that person will not be granted access to the sweet delight of intimate conversation *[munājāt]* with Him (Glory be to Him), because it stands in opposition to Allāh, and it represents the very opposite of that which Allāh loves.”

Concerning the summons issued by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) to all His creatures.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has summoned His creatures to the affirmation of His Oneness *[tauḥīd]* and to obedience toward Him. He has done so by means of the promise *[wa'd]* and the threat *[wa'īd]*, by means of attraction *[targhīb]* and intimidation *[tarhīb]*.

Thus He has cautioned and warned, instilled feelings of fear, and delivered rebukes and reprimands, in order to leave His creatures with no excuse, and to establish the evidence for the case against them, for He has told us (Almighty and Glorious is He):

[We have sent] Messengers	*rusulan mubashshirīna*
bearing good tidings, and warning,	*wa mundhirīna*
in order that mankind might have	*li-allā yakūna li-'n-nāsi*
no argument against Allāh,	*'ala 'llāhi ḥujjatun*
after the Messengers. (4:165)	*ba'da 'r-rusul.*

He has also said (More Glorious is He than any other sayer):

And if We had destroyed them	*wa law annā ahlaknā-hum*
with some punishment before it,	*bi-'adhābin min qabli-hi*
they would surely have said: "Our Lord,	*la-qālū Rabba-nā*
if only You had sent us a Messenger,	*law lā arsalta ilai-nā Rasūlan*
so that we might have followed	*fa-nattabi'a*
Your signs before we were	*āyāti-ka min qabli*
humiliated and disgraced!" (20:134)	*an nadhilla wa nakhzā.*

In another Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*, He has told us:

We never punish	*wa mā kunnā*
until We have sent	*mu'adhdhibīna*
forth a Messenger. (17:15)	*ḥattā nab'atha rasūlā.*

He has said (Exalted is He):

O mankind, now there has come	*yā ayyuha 'n-nāsu qad jā'at-kum*
to you an exhortation from your Lord,	*maw'iẓatun min Rabbi-kum*
and a healing for that	*wa shifā'un li-mā*

which is within the breasts,	*fi 'ṣ-ṣudūri*
and a guidance, and	*wa hudan*
a mercy for the believers. (10:57)	*wa raḥmatun li-'l-mu'minīn.*

For the sake of instilling fear and caution, He has said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

And Allāh warns you to beware of Him,	*wa yuḥadhdhiru-kumu 'llāhu*
and Allāh is Kind and Gentle	*Nafsah: wa 'llāhu*
with His servants. (3:30)	*Ra'ūfun bi-'l-ʿibād.*

He has said (Blessed and Exalted is He):

And know that Allāh knows	*wa 'ʿlamū anna 'llāha*
what is in your own selves,	*yaʿlamu mā fī anfusi-kum*
so beware of Him. (2:235)	*fa-'ḥdharū-h.*

He has said (Magnificent is His Glory):

And know that Allāh	*wa 'ʿlamū anna 'llāha*
is Aware of all things. (2:231)	*bi-kulli shai'in ʿAlīm.*

He has said (Magnificent is His Power):

So observe your duty to Me,	*wa 'ttaqūni*
O men endowed with	*yā uli 'l-albāb.*
faculties of understanding! (2:197)	

He has said (Glory be to Him and Exalted is He):

And observe your duty to Allāh,	*wa 'ttaqu 'llāha wa 'ʿlamū*
and know that you shall meet Him	*anna-kum mulāqū-h.*
[one day]. (2:223)	

He has said (Exalted is He):

And be on your guard against a day	*wa 'ttaqū yawman*
in which you shall	*turjaʿūna*
be brought back to Allāh.	*fī-hi ila 'llāh:*
Then every soul shall be paid in full	*thumma tuwaffā kullu nafsin*
for what it has earned,	*mā kasabat*
and they shall not be wronged.	*wa hum lā yuẓlamūn.*
(2:281)	

He has said (Exalted is He):

And be on your guard against a day	*wa 'ttaqū yawman*
when no soul shall give satisfaction	*lā tajzī nafsun shai'an*
on behalf of another, and no	*wa lā yuqbalu*
compensation shall be accepted of it,	*min-hā ʿadlun*
nor shall any intercession	*wa lā tanfaʿu-hā shafāʿatun*
be of use to it, nor shall	*wa lā hum*
they be helped. (2:123)	*yunṣarūn.*

righteous leader who is expected to reemerge one day from mysterious concealment *[al-qā'im al-muntaẓar]*, in order to fill the earth with justice, as it has been filled with tyrannical oppression.

(p) The Zurāriyya. They are the companions of Zurāra. They make the same claim [on behalf of 'Abdu'llāh ibn Ja'far] as that made by the Mu'ammariyya.

It has been said, however, that Zurāra himself abandoned their doctrine, because he once asked 'Abdu'llāh ibn Ja'far about certain problems, and he did not know the answers, so Zurāra transferred his support to Mūsā ibn Ja'far.

The legal and theological doctrines of the Rawāfiḍ have sometimes been likened to those of Judaism *[al-Yahūdiyya]*. As ash-Sha'bī has expressed it: "The emotional attachment *[maḥabba]* of the Rawāfiḍ is the emotional attachment of the Jews."

The Jews have maintained that the Imāmate [the leadership of the Jewish community] cannot rightfully belong to anyone except a man from the family of David, while the Rāfiḍa have insisted that the Imāmate [the leadership of the Islāmic community] cannot rightfully belong to anyone except a man from among the offspring of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib.

[The following similarities are also worthy of note:]

- Doctrine of the Jews: There can be no sacred struggle *[jihād]* in the cause of Allāh until the False Messiah *[al-Masīḥ ad-Dajjāl]* emerges on the earthly scene, descending by some means from the sky. Doctrine of the Rāfiḍa: There can be no sacred struggle *[jihād]* in the cause of Allāh until the Mahdī emerges on the earthly scene, and a herald cries out from the sky.
- Doctrine of the Jews: The post-sunset ritual prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]* must be postponed until the stars have appeared in their constellations. Doctrine of the Rāfiḍa: The same postponement is required.
- Doctrine of the Jews: There should be a slight deviation from the *Qibla* [the exact direction in which the believers turn when performing their ritual prayers]. Doctrine of the Rāfiḍa: The same.
- Doctrine of the Jews: There should be illumination present while the ritual prayer is being performed. Doctrine of the Rāfiḍa: The same.
- Doctrine of the Jews: The [hanging] doors should be lowered while

what it has forwarded for	*mā qaddamat li-ghad:*
the day ahead. And be careful	*wa 'ttaqu 'llāh:*
to observe your duty to Allāh.	*inna 'llāha Khabīrun*
Allāh is indeed Aware of what you do.	*bi-mā taʿmalūn.*
(59:18)	

He has said (Exalted is He):

And be careful to observe	*wa 'ttaqu 'llāh:*
your duty to Allāh; surely Allāh	*inna 'llāha*
is terrible in retribution. (5:2)	*Shadīdu 'l-ʿiqāb.*

He has said (Exalted is He):

Ward off from yourselves	*qū anfusa-kum*
and your families a Fire	*wa ahlī-kum nāran*
of which the fuel is men	*waqūdu-ha 'n-nāsu*
and stones. (66:6)	*wa 'l-ḥijāratu.*

He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

What, did you suppose	*a-fa-ḥasibtum anna-mā*
that We had created you for	*khalaqnā-kum ʿabathan*
idle sport, and that you would not	*wa anna-kum*
be returned to Us? (23:115)	*ilai-nā lā turjaʿūn.*

He has said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

What, does the human being	*a-yaḥsabu 'l-insānu*
suppose that he shall be left	*an yutraka*
to wander aimlessly? (75:36)	*sudā.*

He has also said (Exalted is He):

What, do the people of	*a-fa-amina ahlu 'l-qurā*
the townships feel secure from	*an ya'tiya-hum*
the coming of Our wrath upon them	*ba'su-nā bayātan*
—as a night raid while they are	*wa hum nā'imūn:*
sound asleep? Or do the people	*aw amina ahlu 'l-qurā*
of the townships feel secure from	*an ya'tiya-hum*
the coming of Our wrath upon them	*ba'su-nā ḍuḥan*
—in the daytime while	*wa hum yalʿabūn.*
they are at play? (7:97,98)	

Well then, O miserable wretch, what is your response to these Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]*, and how do you intend to put them into practice? Have you finally stopped following the dictates of those wicked appetites of yours, which are so harmful to you in this world and the Hereafter, and which will condemn you to dwell in the abode of agony and degradation? If you end up there, you will be scorched by its fire, mangled by its serpents, bitten and stung by its scorpions and its verminous pests, eaten by its worms, beaten and flogged by its hellish guardians *[zabāniya]*[327] and custodians. You will be subjected every day to novel kinds of torment, since you will be sharing that abode with Pharaoh, Hāmān, Qārūn, and the devils.

As we mentioned at the beginning of this subsection, Allāh (Exalted is He) appeals to His creatures by means of attraction *[targhīb]* as well as intimidation *[tarhīb]*. Let us now consider some examples of the former:

He has said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

And whenever someone observes	*wa man yattaqi 'llāha*
his duty to Allāh,	*yaj'al la-hu*
Allāh will prepare a way out for him.	*makhrajā:*
And He will provide for him	*wa yarzuq-hu*
from sources he could never imagine.	*min haithu lā yahtasib:*
And whoever puts all his trust in Allāh,	*wa man yatawakkal 'ala 'llāhi*
He will suffice him. (65:2,3)	*fa-Huwa ḥasbuh.*

He has said (Exalted is He):

And whenever someone observes	*wa man yattaqi 'llāha*
his duty to Allāh, He will acquit	*yukaffir 'an-hu*
him of his evil deeds, and He will	*sayyi'āti-hi wa yu'zim*
grant him a mighty reward. (65:5)	*la-hu ajrā.*

He has said (Exalted is He):

What has deceived you	*mā gharra-ka*
concerning your Lord,	*bi-Rabbi-ka 'l-Karīm:*
the All-Generous,	*alladhī*
who created you, then shaped you,	*khalaqa-ka*
then fashioned you in symmetry?	*fa-sawwā-ka fa-'adala-k.*
(82:6,7)	

He has also said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Is not the time now ripe for	*a-lam ya'ni li'lladhīna*
the hearts of those who believe	*āmanū an takhsha'a*
to submit in all humility	*qulūbu-hum*
to the remembrance of Allāh? (57:16)	*li-dhikri 'llāhi.*

By making you feel the attraction of what He has to offer, He has invited you to seek His gracious favor, the abundance of His mercy, and the delight of His sustenance. He has invited you to seek comfort and traquillity in His presence, by embarking on the path of true devotion *[taqwā]*, sticking to it, and following it with diligent perseverance. He has guided you along that path in order to provide you with explanations, and to give you a clear understanding of the case [that could be made for or against you]. He has also guaranteed that you will afterwards be granted the forgiveness of sins, the remission of bad deeds, and the magnification of reward and recompense, in accordance with His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

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[327] See note 102 on p. 73 above.

And whenever someone	*wa man yattaqi 'llāha*
observes his duty to Allāh,	*yukaffir ʿan-hu*
He will acquit him of his evil deeds,	*sayyi'āti-hi*
and He will grant him a mighty reward.	*wa yuʿẓim la-hu ajrā.*
(65:5)	

Then He has aroused you from your state of delusion concerning Him, from your drowsy lack of attention to Him, from your seeming blindness to His path, and from your seeming inability to hear His Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]*, His exhortations and His admonitions, for He has said (Exalted is He):

What has deceived you concerning	*mā gharra-ka*
your Lord, the All-Generous,	*bi-Rabbi-ka 'l-Karīm:*
who created you, then shaped you,	*alladhī khalaqa-ka*
then fashioned you in symmetry?	*fa-sawwā-ka fa-ʿadala-k.*
(82:6,7)	

He has described Himself as the All-Generous *[al-Karīm]* so that you can have no pretext for abstaining from dealing with Him, for shunning a close relationship with Him, and for paying attention to His creation rather than to Him. Then He has reminded you that it was He who created you, brought you into being from your state of nonexistence, brought you to life after you had been nothing at all, enriched you after your poverty, strengthened you after your weakness, gave you all the benefits of sight after your blindness, imparted knowledge to you after your ignorance, and guided you aright after you had gone astray.

So, what can account for your reluctance, O heedless one, to embark on the quest for His far-reaching grace and favor? What keeps you from the constant practice of obedience to Him, when such obedience would bring you honor in this world, would make you blissfully happy in the life to come, and would promote you to the highest spiritual ranks? Are you quite content with the life of this world? Have you accepted that which is inferior in exchange for that which is better? Have you preferred this world and the people who are most attached to it—and the superficial glamor that you find so charming, although it has no lasting value—instead of Paradise *[Firdaws]* on high, and companionship with the Prophets *[anbiyā']*, the champions of truth *[ṣiddīqīn]* and the martyrs *[shuhadā']*? Surely you must have heard His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Are you content with the	*a-raḍītum*
life of this world,	*bi-'l-ḥayāti 'd-dunyā*
rather than that of the Hereafter?	*mina 'l-ākhira:*
Yet the enjoyment of the	*fa-mā matā'u 'l-*
life of this world,	*ḥayāti 'd-dunyā*
compared with that of the Hereafter,	*fi 'l-ākhirati*
is merely a trivial thing. (9:38)	*illā qalīl.*

You must also have heard His words (Exalted is He):

But you prefer the life of this world,	*bal tu'thirūna 'l-ḥayāta 'd-dunyā:*
although the Hereafter is better	*wa 'l-ākhiratu*
and more lasting. (87:16,17)	*khairun wa abqā.*

And you must have heard His words (Exalted is He):

Then, as for him who was insolent	*fa-ammā man ṭaghā*
and preferred the life of this world,	*wa āthara 'l-ḥayāta 'd-dunyā*
surely Hell shall be his home.	*fa-inna 'l-jaḥīma hiya 'l-ma'wā*
(79:37–39)	

◆

Concerning the special merit of "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*."

From a traditional report that has been transmitted on the authority of 'Atā', we learn that Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said:

"When the expression 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Rahmāni'r-Rahīm]*' was first sent down [by divine revelation to mankind], the clouds fled away to the East, the winds died down, the waves of the ocean heaved in a tempestuous storm, the beasts pricked up their ears to listen, the devils *[shayāṭīn]* were pelted with stones *[rujimat]*[100] to drive them from the sky, and Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) swore by His Almighty Glory that His Name would never be uttered over an illness without His healing that illness, that His Name would never be pronounced over anything without His blessing it, and that anyone who ever recited 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Rahmāni'r-Rahīm]*' would surely enter the Garden of Paradise."

We have it on the authority of Abū Wā'il that it was 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

"If anyone wishes to have Allāh rescue him from the clutches of the nineteen *zabāniya* [tormenting angels within the Fire of Hell], he has only to say: 'In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Rahmāni'r-Rahīm]*,' for these words are spelled with nineteen letters [of the Arabic script],[101] and Allāh and the abode of the Hereafter], and He described His dominion *[mulk]*, His power *[qudra]*, His planning and management *[tadbīr]*, His gracious favor *[minna]*, and His works *[ṣanā’i‘]*. For this purpose He used the technique of coining similitudes *[amthāl]*, then He said (Exalted is He):

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[100] The Arabic verb *rujimat* is formed from the three root letters *r-j-m*, from which the adjective *rajīm* [accursed], the passive participle *marjūm* [cursed] and the nouns *rujūm* [gravestones] and *rujūm* [missiles] are also derived. The connections are fully explained in the preceding Discourse (see pp. 10–13 above).

[101] Namely, the Arabic letters: *bā', sīn, mīm, alif, lām, lām, hā', alif, lām, rā', hā', mīm, nūn, alif, lām, rā', ha, yā', mīm*. (As used in the text of this translation, the romanized transliteration of Arabic words and phrases is designed to represent the pronunciation, rather than the Arabic spelling.)

And as for these similitudes, We coin	*wa tilka ’l-amthālu*
them for mankind, but none will grasp	*naḍribu-hā li’n-nāsi*
their meaning except those who have	*wa mā ya‘qilu-hā*
[the necessary] knowledge. (29:43)	*illa ’l-‘ālimūn.*

Those who are well versed in the knowledge of Allāh *[al-‘ulamā’ bi-’llāh]* are therefore qualified to understand what Allāh intends to convey by His similitudes, because a similitude is merely the depiction of something you have already witnessed with your own eyes, in order to let you see the characteristic features of that which is otherwise invisible to you. It is a device for enabling you to perceive what you cannot perceive with your ordinary eye, by causing the perceptive faculty of your heart to penetrate that which your eyesight is incapable of perceiving. Your heart can thus make sense of all the information that is being addressed to it—information about the Kingdom of Heaven *[al-Malakūt]*, information about the two abodes *[ad-dārain]*, and information about the King of kings *[Malik al-mulūk]*.

There is not a single delight or pleasure in this world that does not serve as a model for the Garden of Paradise, and as a foretaste of what will be experienced therein. Beyond all this, however, the Garden of Paradise also contains that which no eye has ever seen, of which no ear has ever heard, and the very notion of which has never occurred to any human heart.[128] If any element of this mystery were to be mentioned by name to the servants [of the Lord], the use of such a name would be to no avail, because they cannot understand its meaning here below, since they have never seen what it refers to, and it has no model in this world. The Garden of Paradise actually has no fewer than one hundred ascending levels *[darajāt]*, but He has described only three of them: one as consisting of gold, one as consisting of silver, and one as consisting of light. Then, beyond that point, there is something incomprehensible, something which human minds are quite incapable of grasping.

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[128] An allusion to the Divine Saying *[Ḥadīth Qudsī]*:

I have prepared for My righteous servants that which no eye has ever seen, of which no ear has ever heard, and the very notion of which has never occurred to any human heart.

As for the agony and torment that exist in this world, these likewise constitute a model, which serves to represent the abode of punishment [in the Fire of Hell]. But then again, beyond all this, there is something that human minds are quite incapable of comprehending. In this case, that something is a whole assortment of unimaginable torments.

Whatever may lie in store for those who are condemned to the Fire of Hell, it will emerge to meet them out of His wrath, and whatever may lie in store for those who are worthy of the Garden of Paradise, it will emerge to greet them out of His mercy. For each and every one of His servants who has acquired no more than his lawful share of this world, and has thanked Him for it, He will provide a recompense in the Garden of Paradise—a recompense so great that his share of this world will seem quite tiny by comparison. By acquiring things that were not lawful to him, on the other hand, a person will deprive himself of his portion of the ascending levels *[darajāt]*, and anyone who denies their very existence will be utterly deprived of the Garden of Paradise and all that it contains.

For those who are worthy to inhabit the Garden of Paradise, there will be brides *['arā'is]* and wedding feasts *[walā'im]* and hospitable entertainments *[diyāfāt]*. The brides are for benefit of the single men *[di'wa]*, for the very good reason that the Lord of Honor *[Rabb al-'Izza]* (Glory be to Him) has summoned them to the Abode of Peace *[Dār as-Salām]* in order that He may provide them with fresh new bodies and everlasting lives. The wedding feasts are for the benefit of the married partners, and the hospitable entertainments are for the reception of guests—to provide opportunities for the inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise to meet with one another, to exchange visits, and to converse in settings of intimate conviviality. They will have a gathering place in the shade of the Tree of Bliss *[Ṭūbā]*,[129] where they will meet the Messengers *[Rusul]* and visit with them, as well as enjoying occasional sessions in the company of the angels (may the peace of Allāh be upon them all).

Other amenities available to them will include market places, where they can come and select various shapes and forms, and gifts from the

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[129] The *Tūbā* tree is traditionally depicted as having its roots in Paradise, while its leaves and branches extend downwards toward the earth. According to some accounts, one of its branches will enter the mansion of each inhabitant of the Garden of Paradise, bearing flowers and ripe fruit of every imaginable kind.

All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]* at the times of the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*. They will have all kinds of food, drink and fruits at their disposal at every moment of the day, be it early in the morning or late at night. Their various forms of nourishment will actually be a constantly flowing stream, never cut off and never interrupted. They will receive an increase from Allāh with every day that passes, and as soon as they receive the latest increment, they will forget what they had before.

Then there is a park or recreation ground *[muntazah]* for them to enjoy. They will find it situated in the midst of charming meadows on the bank of the River of Abundance *[al-Kawthar]*.[130] Pitched on the grounds of that park are pavilions made of pearls. Each pavilion is sixty miles in length and an equal distance in width, and is made of one single pearl *[lu'lu'a]* in which no hole has been pierced. Inside those pavilions there are maidservants fragrantly perfumed, who have never been looked at by any angel, nor by any of the people of the Garden of Paradise, such as the attendants and the houries *[hūr]*. We know about them from the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

In them [are maidens] good and beautiful. (55:70)	*fī-hinna* *khairātun ḥisān.*

Since Allāh calls them beautiful *[ḥisān]*, who else could even attempt to describe their beauty *[ḥusn]*?! Then He goes on to say (Exalted is He)

Fair ones, cloistered in pavilions. (55:72)	*hūrun maqṣūrātun fi 'l-khiyām.*

For they are the select choice of the All-Merciful One *[ar-Raḥmān]*, who has chosen their beautiful forms out of all the forms in existence. They have been created from the clouds of His mercy *[raḥma]*, for when those clouds deliver rain, they send forth a shower of beautiful maidservants, in compliance with the wish of the All-Generous One *[al-Karīm]*. The light of their faces comes from the light of the Heavenly Throne *['Arsh]*. Pavilions of pearl have been pitched over them, so no one has seen them since the moment of their creation, for they are "cloistered in pavilions *[maqṣūrātun fi 'l-khiyām]*." To say that they have been cloistered *[quṣirna]* is a way of saying that they have been kept in confinement, so as to be accessible to their husbands alone, and to no one else in the whole of creation.

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[130] In Vol. 1, p. 248, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) tells us that, according to the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> I was admitted to the Garden of Paradise, and—lo and behold!—there I was beside a flowing stream, flanked on both sides by pavilions made of pearls. I dipped my hand in [what looked like] water flowing by, and—lo and behold!—it was musk, of the most exquisitely fragrant kind. I said: "O Gabriel, what is this?" He replied: "This is the River of Abundance *[al-Kawthar]*, which Allāh (Exalted is He) has bestowed upon you."

The inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise will thus lead a life of ease and comfort within palatial mansions *[quṣūr]* and in the company of their spouses. They will tarry in this state of blissful happiness as long as Allāh wills it so—until the day comes when Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) wishes to introduce them to a new kind of bliss *[ni'ma]* and a new form of recreation *[nuzha]*, at which point they will hear a voice calling out to them on all the ascending levels of the Gardens of Paradise *[darajāt al-Jinān]*: "O people of the Gardens of Paradise, this is the day of entertainment and happiness, relaxation and joy. You must therefore go out to your recreation ground *[muntazah]*."

In response to this call, they will sally forth on horses of pearl and sapphire, riding like the lords of their cities as they head out toward those open spaces. Then they will travel over those open spaces to those charming meadows on the bank of the River of Abundance *[al-Kawthar]*, and so Allāh will guide them to their camp sites. Every man amongst them will then dismount beside his pavilion—only to find that there is no entrance to it. The pavilion must therefore be penetrated by some means other than an ordinary doorway, and this is done when it is split open by the eye of the saintly friend *[walī]* of Allāh (Exalted is He), in order to let him know that she who is inside the pavilion has never been examined by anyone else—in fulfillment of the promise previously given by Allāh, in the abode of this world, inasmuch as He said:

In them [are maidens] good and beautiful. (55:70)	*fī-hinna* *khairātun ḥisān.*

And then He said (Exalted is He):

Fair ones, cloistered in pavilions. (55:72)	*ḥūrun maqṣūrātun fi 'l-khiyām.*

And then He went on to say:

[Fair ones] whom neither man nor jinn will have touched before them. (55:74)	*lam yaṭmith-hunna insun* *qabla-hum wa lā jānn.*

The man will then recline beside her on the couch of recreation *[sarīr an-nuzha]* inside those curtained canopies *[ḥijāl]*. Like each of the other men, he will be treated to a portion of her nuptial banquet *[walīma]*. Then, when they have sampled the main courses of the nuptial banquets, Allāh will provide them with pure wine to quench their thirst. They will derive great pleasure from the novel fruits with which Allāh supplies them on that day—from all those novel gifts, including the decorations *[ḥulā]* and the suits of clothes *[ḥulal]*, for they will be invested with the raiment of the All-Merciful One *[kiswat ar-Raḥmān]*. They will busy themselves with the maidens good and beautiful, who will satisfy their every wish and desire. Then they will move on to enjoy the delights of sitting on the marvelous carpets *[ʿabqariyyāt]*, embroidered with all kinds of decorative patterns, that grace the banks of the streams in those charming meadows. They will climb aboard the green cradle-cushions *[rafārif]* and recline upon them in comfort. All of this is foretold in His words (Exalted is He):

[There they will be] reclining on	*muttaki'īna*
greencradle-cushions and	*ʿalā rafrafin khuḍrin*
beautiful rugs. (55:76)	*wa ʿabqariyyin ḥisān.*

When Allāh calls something beautiful, what is left for anyone else to say about it? As for the cradle-cushion *[rafraf]*, it is something that causes a person who reclines upon it to rock to and fro—as on a swing *[urjūḥa]*—to right and left, and up and down, while sharing the fun of the ride with his close companion.

When they climb aboard the cradle-cushions, Isrāfīl[331] (peace be upon him) will break into song. According to the traditional report *[khabar]* that has been handed down to us:[332]

> Of all the creatures of Allāh (Exalted is He), not one has a voice more beautiful than that of Isrāfīl (peace be upon him). So, when he breaks into song, the inhabitants of the seven heavens have their ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* and their glorification *[tasbīḥ]* cut short.

When they climb aboard the cradle-cushions, and Isrāfīl starts singing all kinds of songs, hymning the glory and the holiness of the King Most Holy *[al-Malik al-Quddūs]*, not a single tree in the Garden of Paradise will fail to blossom, not a single screen or door will fail to tremble and burst open, not a single doorbell will fail to tinkle with its full array of chimes, and not a single thicket of gold and silver canes will fail to let the sound of his voice blow through its reeds. Those reeds will therefore play all kinds of tunes. Among all the maidens with eyes so fair *[al-ḥūr al-'īn]*,[333] not a single one will fail to sing her songs, and the birds will join in with their melodies. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will then tell the angels by way of inspiration: "Respond to them, and let the sound of your voices be heard by those servants of Mine who have kept their choral music *[samā']* free from contamination by the woodwind instruments of Satan *[mazāmīr ash-Shaiṭān]*." The angels will promptly respond with melodies and sounds of a spiritual nature *[rūḥāniyya]*. These sounds will blend together, so as to become a single vibration. At this point Allāh (Exalted is He) will say: "Arise, O David, and stand by the leg of My throne, then celebrate My glory!" David will launch at once into the celebration of His glory, using a voice that overflows all other voices and makes them sound much sweeter.

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[331] Isrāfīl (peace be upon him) is the angel who is charged with the task of sounding the trumpet on the Day of Resurrection.

[332] See note 176 on p. 130 above.

The pleasure experienced by the people of the pavilions will thus be multiplied again and again, as they rock to and fro and swing up and down on those cradle-cushions, for they will be surrounded by all kinds of delightful sensations and songs. All of this is foretold in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

[As for those who believed, and did	*[fa-ammā 'lladhīna āmanū*
good works], they shall be made happy	*wa 'amilu 's-sāliḥāti]*
in a charming meadow. (30:15)	*fa-hum fī rauḍatin yuḥbarūn*

It was Yaḥyā ibn Kathīr[334] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said [in commenting on this particular Qur'ānic verse]: "The 'charming meadow' *[ar-rauḍa]* means sensual pleasure and musical entertainment *[al-ladhdha wa 's-samā']*."

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[333] In other words, the 'houries' of Paradise, mentioned several times in the Qur'ān. Literally, according to the Arabic lexicographers, 'women whose eyes are characterized by intense whiteness of the part that is white, and intense blackness of the part that is black,' or, more poetically, 'women with eyes resembling those of the gazelle.' Pickthall translates *wa zawwajnāhum bi-ḥūrin 'īn* (Qur'ān 44:54). 'And We shall wed them unto fair ones with wide, lovely eyes.' (See: *The Glorious Koran*. English translation by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980.)

[334] Abū Zakariyā' Yaḥyā ibn Hāshim ibn Kathīr ibn Qais al-Ghassānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was an expert in the tradition of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), although some authorities have questioned his reliability. The date of his death has not been recorded, but he is known to have been a student of al-A'mash (d. ca. 148) and other traditionists of the same period.

Suddenly, while they are busily indulging in their sensual pleasures and enjoying their merry delight, the gateway of the King Most Holy *[al-Malik al-Quddūs]*—that is to say, the gateway of the Garden of Eden *[Jannat ‘Adn]*—will open unto them. The sound of the voices of spiritual beings *[rūḥāniyyīn]*, arrayed in ranks, will then issue forth from the Garden of Eden, vibrantly hymning the praises of the All-Generous and Nobly Exalted One *[tamājīd al-Mājid al-Karīm]* to all the ascending levels of the Gardens of Paradise *[darajāt al-Jinān]*. A wind of Eden will begin to blow, wafting forth all kinds of sweet perfume, spreading the breath of life, and fanning the gentle breeze *[nasīm]*—that is to say, the gentle breeze of nearness [to the Lord].

In the wake of this, a light will shine, and its radiance will shed a brilliant glow upon their charming meadows, their pavilions, and the banks of their rivers and streams. Every single thing that belongs to them will be filled with light. Then the Majestic One (Magnificent is His Majesty) *[al-Jalīl—jalla Jalālu-hu]* will call out to them from up above their heads:

"Peace be upon you *[as-salāmu ‘alaikum]*, My dear ones *[aḥibbā'ī]*, My saintly friends *[auliyā'ī]* and My chosen ones *[aṣfiyā'ī]*! O people of the Garden of Paradise, how did you find your recreational park *[muntazah]*? This is your special day, in lieu of the New Year's Day *[Nairūz]* of My enemies. They tried to find a special day in the world below, in order to freshen and renew for themselves the blissful happiness which they had spoiled for themselves on account of their wicked conduct and their wretched behavior. But they failed to obtain the pleasure they were seeking.

"They incurred nothing but loss, instead of what they sought to acquire immediately, in the temporal realm *[fi 'l-‘ājil]*, and they were too impatient to wait until they could obtain all this, which I had prepared in the realm of the future *[fi 'l-ājil]*, for the benefit of those who were faithfully committed to obeying Me. You turned your backs on all that they found so intensely interesting, and you refused to get involved in matters that stir up rivalry and mutual competition among people addicted to the lower world. Ah well, today they are tasting the evil consequences of that which spurred them to compete with one another in such pointless rivalry.

"How swiftly it all came to a sudden end—the sensual pleasure and the greedy satisfaction they sought in the abode of fleeting existence *[dār al-fanā']*! They have been reduced to humiliation and disgrace, whereas you have been rewarded for your patience with a Garden of Paradise, with garments of silk, with a park for recreation, and with a greeting of 'Peace!' This day is indeed your New Year's Day *[Nairūz]* and your opportunity for happy relaxation. This day is the occasion of your visit to My Abode *[Dārī]* in the Garden of Eden.

"How often I saw you during the days of your lives in the world below, on the likes of this day, busily engaged in My worship and in faithful obedience to Me! They would be luxuriating in their idle sport and games—intoxicated, bewildered, sinfully disobedient and rebellious. They would be enjoying the ephemeral vanities of the lower world, and gleefully rejoicing in the way those vanities rotated and circulated amongst them, whereas you would be vigilantly devoted to the contemplation of My Majesty *[Jalāl]*, keeping strictly within the limits set by My rules of law *[ḥudūd]*, observing the terms of My covenant *['ahd]*, and taking the utmost care to respect My rights *[ḥuqūq]*."

At this point, one of the doors of the Fires of Hell will be held open for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Gardens of Paradise. As the flames and the smoke belch forth, along with the screams and the yelling and howling of the people inside, they will view the scene from those comfortable seats of theirs. They will recognize and appreciate how bountiful are the favors that Allāh has bestowed upon them, and so they will experience an even greater measure of exultation and happiness.

As for the inhabitants of the Fire of Hell, they will gaze out from those jails and prison cells, shackled by those fetters and chains, and they will feel bitter disappointment over what has passed them by. They will stare at the faces of the inhabitants of the Gardens of Paradise, desperately imploring them to appeal on their behalf for Allāh's help, and calling out to them by their personal names, so Allāh (Blessed is His Name) will say:

See, those who are worthy of the	*inna aṣḥāba 'l-jannati 'l-yauma*
Garden[of Paradise] are busy this day	*fī shughulin fākihūn:*
in their rejoicing, they and	*hum wa azwāju-hum*
their spouses, reclining upon	*fī ẓilālin 'ala 'l-arā'iki*
couches in the shade.	*muttaki'ūn:*

There they have fruits, and they	*la-hum fī-hā fākihatun wa la-hum*
have all that they call for.	*mā yadda'ūn:*
"Peace!"—such is the greeting	*salām: qawlan*
from a Lord All-Compassionate.	*min Rabbin Raḥīm:*
But keep yourselves apart,	*wa 'mtāzu 'l-yawma*
O you guilty ones, on this day.	*ayyuha 'l-mujrimūn:*
Did I not make a covenant with you,	*a-lam a'had ilai-kum*
O you sons of Adam,	*yā Banī Ādama*
that you should not worship Satan	*al-lā ta'budu 'sh-shaiṭān:*
—surely he is an obvious enemy to you	*inna-hu la-kum 'aduwwun mubīn:*
—and that you should worship Me?	*wa ani 'budūnī:*
This is a straight path. (36:55–61)	*hādhā ṣirāṭun mustaqīm.*

The Fire of Hell will therefore blaze all the more fiercely for them, and so their gathered throng will be dispersed and their plaintive wailing will cease. They will then be tossed toward islands in the Fire of Hell, and there, as soon as they have scrambled ashore, scorpions with stings as big as date palms will come crawling to meet them. The next thing to come rushing toward them will be a torrential stream of fire, fueled by the wrath of the All-Compelling One *[al-Jabbār]*. This flood will sweep them away and plunge them deep into the oceans of the Fires of Hell, and a herald will proclaim at the behest of Allāh (Exalted is He):

"This is your special day, the one you have been provoking Me to prepare for you by committing monstrous sins, by rebelling against Me in spite of My bountiful blessings, and by taking such gleeful delight—while still in the abode of sorrows and servitude—in what you dared to consider comparable to that which I have prepared for people faithfully committed to obeying Me. Well, those sensual pleasures are over and done with, as far as you are concerned, so now you must taste the evil consequences of the course you preferred to adopt.

"Those who have proved themselves worthy of the Garden of Paradise—from whose number you are totally excluded—are the ones who are now busily engaged in the luxurious enjoyment of wedding banquets, all kinds of fruits and an exquisite variety of gifts, the deflowering of virgin brides, the thrill of riding on the cradle-cushions *[rafārif]*, the sweet delight of listening to songs and many different types of music, My greeting of peace upon them, My kind and gentle treatment of them, and then—in addition to all this—something designed to exhaust all their previous blessings, in order to make them ready to experience their state of bliss anew, and to receive a pleasure that will greatly exceed the pleasure they have already enjoyed.

"O you who have proved yourselves worthy of the Garden of Paradise, this day has been granted to you, instead of the day of My enemies, who greeted one another [on their New Year's Day], and gave gifts to their kings and accepted gifts from them. You are the triumphantly successful ones *[al-fā'izūn]*!"[335]

Abū Huraira[336] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "A man once said to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'I happen to be a man who is very fond of the sound of a beautiful voice, so tell me, is the sound of a beautiful voice to be heard in the Garden of Paradise?' He responded to this (may Allāh be well pleased with him) by saying: 'Yes indeed, by Him in whose Hand is my soul! By way of inspiration, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will instruct a tree in the Garden of Paradise to declare on His behalf: 'Listen to this, O My servants, who have been too preoccupied with My worship and My remembrance to indulge in making music with guitars *[barābiṭ]* and woodwind instruments *[mazāmīr]*!' The tree will then raise its voice to a higher pitch, producing a sound the likes of which no beings in the whole of creation have ever heard before, in order to hymn the glory of the Lord and to celebrate His holiness.'"

Abū Qallāba (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "A man once said to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'Is there such a thing as night in the Garden of Paradise?' He responded to this (may Allāh be well pleased with him) by saying: 'Whatever can have prompted you to ask that question?' The man then said: 'I heard the statement made by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) in His Book:

And in it they shall	*wa la-hum*
have their sustenance,	*rizqu-hum*
in the early morning	*fī-hā bukratan*
and in the evening. (19:62)	*wa ʿashiyyā.*

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[335] This is an obvious allusion to the verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān in which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

Not equal are the inhabitants	*lā yastawī*
of the Fire of Hell and the inhabitants	*aṣḥābu 'n-nāri*
of the Garden of Paradise. The inhabitants	*wa aṣḥābu 'l-janna:*
of the Garden of Paradise—they	*aṣḥābu 'l-jannati*
are the triumphantly successful ones! (59:20)	*humu 'l-fā'izūn.*

[336] See note 226 on p. 163 above.

—so I said to myself: "Night in the Garden of Paradise must fall between the early morning and the evening time."' But Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told him: 'There is no night over there. There is never anything other than radiance and light. The forenoon *[ghuduww]* turns into the afternoon *[rawāḥ]*, and then the afternoon turns directly into the next forenoon. The inhabitants receive an exquisite variety of gifts from Allāh, at the times prescribed for the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* which they used to perform in the lower world, and the angels salute them with the greeting of peace.'"

For anyone who wishes to enjoy a share in this delightful and everlasting life, it is essential to observe with care the rules and conditions of true devotion *[taqwā]*, as they are set forth in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

It is not piety, that you turn your	*laisa 'l-birra an tuwallū wujūha-kum*
faces to the East and to the West.	*qibala 'l-mashriqi wa 'l-maghribi*
True piety is [the piety of]	*wa lākinna 'l-birra*
one who believes	*man āmana*
in Allāh and the Last Day	*bi-'llāhi wa 'l-yawmi 'l-ākhiri*
and the angels and the Book	*wa 'l-malā'ikati wa 'l-kitābi*
and the Prophets;	*wa 'n-nabiyyīn:*
one who gives his wealth,	*wa āta 'l-māla 'alā*
for love of Him,	*ḥubbi-hi*
to kinsfolk and to orphans	*dhawi 'l-qurbā*
and the needy	*wa 'l-yatāmā*
and the wayfarer	*wa 'l-masākīna*
and to those who beg,	*wa 'bna 's-sabīli*
and to set slaves free;	*wa 's-sā'ilīna wa fi 'r-riqāb:*
one who duly performs the	*wa aqāma 'ṣ-ṣalāta*
ritual prayer, and pays the alms-due.	*wa āta 'z-zakāh:*
[It is the piety of those] those who fulfill	*wa 'l-mūfūna*
their covenant when they have	*bi-'ahdi-him*
committed themselves to a covenant,	*idhā 'āhadū:*
and who are patient in tribulation	*wa 'ṣ-ṣābirīna fi 'l-ba'sā'i*
and adversity and in time of stress.	*wa 'ḍ-ḍarrā'i wa ḥīna 'l-ba's:*
Such are they who are sincere.	*ulā'ika 'lladhīna ṣadaqū:*
Such are the truly devout. (2:177)	*ulā'ika humu 'l-muttaqūn.*

It is also incumbent upon such a person to ensure that the prescribed penalties and reparations of Islām are duly put into effect.

Ḥudhaifa ibn al-Yamān[137] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said, in an interpretative commentary *[tafsīr]* on His words (Exalted is He):

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[137] Abū 'Abdi'llāh Ḥudhaifa ibn [the son of] al-Yamān al-'Absī (may Allāh be well pleased with them both) was among the earliest to embrace Islām, and he came to be one of the most distinguished of all the Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He was famous for his dedication to an abstinent way of life. Together with Abū 'd-Dardā' and Abū Dharr (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), he was one of those Companions who were called *ṣāḥib sirr an-Nabī*, because of the secret knowledge imparted to them by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He died in A.H. 36.

O you who believe,	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna*
come into [the religion of] peace,	*āmanu 'dkhulū*
each and every one of you. (2:208):	*fi 's-silmi kāffa.*

"Islām consists of eight portions: (1) The ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* is a portion, (2) the alms-due *[zakāt]* is a portion, (3) fasting *[ṣiyām]* is a portion, (4) the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* is a portion, (5) the Lesser Pilgrimage or Visitation *['Umra]* is a portion,[338] (6) the sacred struggle or holy war *[jihād]* [339] is a portion, (7) enjoining what is right and fair *[al-amr bi-'l-ma'rūf]* is a portion, and (8) forbidding what is wrong and unfair *[an-nahy 'ani 'l-munkar]* is a portion.[340] What a terrible failure is he who has no portion at all!"

According to a report transmitted by 'Āṣim, i.e., 'Āṣim the Cross-Eyed *[al-Aḥwal]*, on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik[341] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The likeness of Islām is that of a firm and sturdy tree: Belief in Allāh *[al-īmān bi-'llāh]* is its root. The five daily ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* are its forks. The fast *[ṣiyām]* of Ramaḍān is its bark. The Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* and the Visitation *['Umra]* are its sap. The minor ablution *[wuḍū']* and the major ablution *[ghusl]* to remove defilement are its supply of water. The reverential treatment of one's parents *[birr al-wālidain]* and respect for the bond of kinship *[ṣilat ar-raḥim]* are its branches. The scrupulous avoidance of things forbidden by Allāh *[al-kaff 'an maḥārimi 'llāh]* makes up its foliage. Righteous deeds *[a'māl ṣāliḥa]* are its fruit, and the remembrance of Allāh *[dhikru 'llāh]* makes up its veins.

Then he went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Just as a tree can neither flourish nor develop properly unless it bears green leaves, Islām cannot develop properly except through the scrupulous avoidance of things forbidden by Allāh, and through the doing of righteous deeds.

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[338] For the extensive treatment given by Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) to each of the first five of these "portions of Islām," the reader is referred to the relevant chapters and subsections in Vol. 1.

[339] See note 310 on p. 215 above.

[340] The seventh and eighth of these "portions of Islām" are of considerable importance to anyone seeking for a better understanding of the varied manifestations of "political activism" in the contemporary Muslim world. In an earlier volume of the present work, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has devoted an entire—and highly illuminating—chapter to the subject of *al-amr bi-'l-ma'rūf wa 'n-nahy 'ani 'l-munkar* [the duty to enjoin what is right and fair and to forbid what is wrong and unfair]. (See: Vol. 1, pp. 151–70.)

[341] See note 265 on p. 188 above.

Concerning the nature of the Fire of Hell and what Allāh has prepared therein for its inhabitants, and the nature of the Garden of Paradise and what Allāh has prepared therein for its inhabitants.

Abū Huraira[342] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> 'When the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]* has finally arrived, and all creatures have been gathered together on a single piece of high ground "for a Day of which there is no doubt *[li-Yaumin lā raiba fīh]*,"[343] a black shadow will envelop them, and the darkness will be so intense that they will not be able to see one another. The assembled creatures will all be standing on the balls of their feet [as they try to peer upwards], even though the distance between them and their Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) will still be that of a journey that normally takes seventy years to complete.'

"He then went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> 'While they are in that situation, the Creator *[al-Khāliq]* (Blessed and Exalted is He) will suddenly make Himself manifest to the angels. The earth will at once become radiant with the light of its Lord, and the darkness will vanish away. All those creatures will thus be enveloped by the light of their Lord, while the angels are circling around the Heavenly Throne *['Arsh]*, hymning the praise of their Lord and celebrating His holiness.'

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[342] See note 226 on p. 163 above.

[343] An allusion to the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Our Lord, You are the One	*Rabba-nā inna-ka*
who shall gather mankind together	*Jāmi'u 'n-nāsi*
for a Day of which there is no doubt.	*li-yaumin lā raiba fī-h:*
Allāh does not fail to keep the tryst. (3:9)	*inna 'llāha lā yukhlifu 'l-mī'ād*
How [will it be with them] when We have	*fa-kaifa idhā jama'nā-hum*
brought them all together for a Day	*li-yaumin lā raiba fīh:*
of which there is no doubt, when every soul	*wa wuffiyat kullu nafsin*
shall be paid in full for what it has earned,	*mā kasabat*
and they shall not be wronged! (3:25)	*wa hum lā yuẓlamūn.*

"He then continued (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> 'While those creatures are all standing there in rows, with each religious community *[umma]* lined up in a separate area, the record sheets *[suhuf]* and the balance *[mīzān]* will suddenly be brought to the fore. The record sheets will be laid in the scale, while the balance is held suspended by the hand of one of the angels, and they will sometimes cause it to rise up high, and at other times to sink down low.'

"To this he added (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> 'While they are in that state, lo and behold, the screen will suddenly be removed from Garden of Paradise, which will then be brought nearer. A wind will blow forth from inside it, and the Muslims will discover that it has a fragrant aroma like musk, even though the distance between them and the Garden of Paradise is still that of a journey that normally takes five hundred years to complete.
>
> 'The lid will then be removed from Hell *[Jahannam]*, and a wind will blow forth from it, together with a terrible cloud of smoke. The wicked sinners will thus discover that it has a stinking aroma, even though the distance between them and Hell is still that of a journey that normally takes five hundred years to complete.
>
> 'Hell will then be brought closer, dragged along by means of an enormous chain, to which it has been firmly tied. Nineteen keepers, chosen from among the angels, will be tugging at that chain, and each of those keepers will be accompanied by seventy thousand other angels, serving as his assistants. While each of the nineteen keepers, together with his assistants, takes a turn at dragging Hell along, the other keepers, together with their assistants, will be walking to the right and left of it, and following up behind it. Each and every angel amongst them will hold in his hand a grappling hook made of iron. They will shout and bellow as they goad Hell along, but its slow progress will be made to the accompaniment of moaning and sighing, staggering and stumbling, clouds of gloom and smoke, rattling and clanking noises, and a towering inferno stoked by the fury of its rage against its own inhabitants. Thus they will eventually install it in a position midway between the Garden of Paradise and the place where the resurrected creatures are kept standing *[al-mauqif]*.
>
> 'At this point, Hell will lift its gaze. As soon as it spies the creatures assembled there, it will bolt toward them in order to devour them. Its keepers will have to pull on its chains to hold it in check, for if it were left to its own devices, it would pounce upon every believer *[mu'min]* and unbeliever *[kāfir]* without distinction. Once it sees that it has been effectively restrained from attacking the assembled throng of creatures, it will simmer and boil with an intensity that can hardly be distinguished from the most furious kind of rage. Then it will heave another sigh, and the resurrected creatures will hear the sound of the gnashing of its teeth. This will cause their hearts to shudder and tremble with alarm. They will fly into a state of panic, their eyes will glaze over, and their hearts will end up in their throats.'"

According to another report, somebody once said: "O Prophet of Allāh, describe Hell to us!" He responded to this (Allāh bless him and give him peace) by saying:

> Very well. Like this earth in magnitude. Seventy degrees of longitude. Dark black. It has seven heads, and each of its heads has thirty doors. The length of each of its doors is equal to the distance of a journey that would take three nights. Its upper lip protrudes against its nose, while it trails its lower lip on the ground. In each of its nostrils there is a shackle and and enormous chain, which is held in the grasp of seventy thousand angels, all of them rough, stern, their teeth grimly gritted, their eyes like live coals, and their colors like the flames of fire. While their nostrils give vent to lofty columns of flame and smoke, they stand at the ready, prepared at all times to receive and carry out the command of the All-Compelling One *[al-Jabbār]* (Blessed and Exalted is He).

Then the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) went on to say:

> There will come a moment when Hell *[Jahannam]* asks its Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) for permission to perform an act of worshipful prostration *[sujūd]*. He will give it permission to do so, and Hell will thereupon adopt an attitude of prostration for as long as Allāh wills. Then the All-Compelling One *[al-Jabbār]* (Almighty and Glorious is He) will say: "Now raise your head!"

He continued (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Hell will raise its head at once, saying: "Praise be to Allāh, who has made me the instrument by which He exacts retribution from those who disobey Him, and has not made anything in the whole of His creation an instrument by which to exact retribution from me!"

To this he added (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Then Hell will say, over and over again, with a tongue that is fluent *[taliq]* and eloquent *[dhaliq]* and smooth *[saliq]*: "Praise be to Allāh *[al-hamdu li'llāh]*!" For as long as Allāh wills, it will go on repeating this declaration of praise, in a loud voice peculiar to itself alone.
>
> Then Hell will heave a deep sigh, which will so affect those who hear it that not a single one of them will fail to sink down on his knees—not one angel brought near to the Lord *[mal'ak muqarrab]*, not one Prophet sent as a Messenger *[nabī mursal]*, and not one of those resurrected creatures who are present at the place of standing *[al-mauqif]*.
>
> Then Hell will heave a second deep sigh, and not a single eye that still has a drop of moisture in it will fail to shed a tear.
>
> Then Hell will heave a third deep sigh, and even if those who hear that sigh—be they human beings or jinn—were each endowed with the merit of seventy-two Prophets, they would surely be moved to embrace her as a man embraces a woman *[la-wāqa'ū-hā]*.[344]

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[344] In Arabic, the words *Jahannam* [Hell], *an-Nār* [the Fire of Hell], *al-Janna* [the Garden of Paradise], *ad-dunyā* [this world] and *al-ākhira* [the hereafter] are all grammatically feminine. This makes it easy for an Arabic speaker or writer to personify them as female beings, if he wishes to represent them as characters in a parable, rather than as abstract entities.

> Then Hell will heave a fourth deep sigh, and nothing that is capable of speech will fail to have its speech arrested. The only exceptions will be Gabriel, Michael, and [Abraham] the Bosom Friend *[Khalīl]* of the All-Merciful One *[ar-Rahmān]* (Almighty and Glorious is He), each one of whom will say, as they cling to the Heavenly Throne *[‘Arsh]*: "My own soul, my own soul *[nafsī, nafsī]*—that is all I beg You to spare!"

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued:

> Then Hell will send forth a shower of sparks, as numerous as the stars. Each spark will be like an enormous cloud arising in the West, and that shower of sparks will fall upon the heads of the assembled creatures.

He went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Then the Bridge *[Sirāt]* will be erected over Hell. Seven hundred arches will be made ready to support it, and the distance between each pair of arches will be that of a journey taking seventy years.[145] The dimensions of the Bridge *[Sirāt]* will be as follows: from the first platform down to the second platform, the distance of a journey taking five hundred years; from the second down to the third, the distance of a journey taking five hundred years; from the third down to the fourth, the same distance again; from the fourth down to the fifth, the same distance again, from the fifth down to the sixth, the same distance again; and from the sixth down to the seventh, likewise. This seventh platform will be the widest of them all, the hottest of them all, the most deeply concave of them all, the most varied of them all [in its range of torments], and the most fiery of them all—by a factor of seventy.
>
> As for the lowest platform, its flames will rise up past the Bridge on the right side and the left, as they soar into the sky to a distance of three miles. Each platform will be hotter, more thickly littered with live coals, and beset with more varied kinds of torment than the one above it—by a factor of seventy.
>
> Upon each platform there will be an ocean, rivers, mountains and trees. The height of each of those mountains, as it towers up into the sky, will be equal to the distance of a journey taking seventy thousand years. There will be seventy such mountains on each platform, and on each mountain there will be seventy thousand separate hills. On each of those separate hills there will be seventy thousand thorny trees *[shajara darī‘]*.[146] Each of those trees will have seventy branches, and there will be seventy serpents and seventy scorpions lurking on each of its branches. Each of those serpents will be three miles in length, and as for the scorpions, they will resemble huge Bactrian camels. Seventy thousand pieces of fruit will be dangling from each of those trees, and each piece of fruit will have the shape of a devil's head. Inside almost every one of those pieces of fruit there will be seventy worms, and each of those worms will be exceedingly long. Some pieces of fruit will not contain worms, but they will have thorns inside them instead.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also used to say:

> Hell *[Jahannam]* has seven entrances, and each of those entrances has seventy valleys. The depth of each of those valleys is the distance of a journey taking

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[145] ***Author's note:*** According to one version of this report, there will be seven arches [rather than seven hundred].

[146] See note 168 on p. 125 above.

seventy years. Each of those valleys has seventy thousand branches, and in each of its branches there are seventy thousand caves. In each of those caves there are seventy thousand crevices, and each of its crevices extends to the distance of a journey taking seventy years. Seventy thousand snakes are lurking inside each of those crevices, and there are seventy thousand scorpions inside the jaws of each of those snakes. Each of those scorpions has seventy thousand spinal columns, and each of its spinal columns contains a flask of poison. Neither the unbeliever *[kāfir]* nor the hypocrite *[munāfiq]* will reach his final destination without experiencing all this to the full.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

While the assembled creatures are down on their knees, and Hell is prancing about like a camel in heat, a herald will issue a proclamation in a very loud voice. The Prophets *[anbiyā']*, the champions of truth *[ṣiddīqūn]*, the martyrs *[shuhadā']* and the righteous *[ṣāliḥūn]* will thereupon spring to their feet. Then they will offer a proposal, to the effect that wrongs should be set right. Then they will offer a second proposal, the effect of which will be that the disembodied spirits *[arwāḥ]* and the physical bodies *[ajsād]* engage in mutual debate, and that the physical bodies win the argument against the disembodied spirits. Then they will offer a third proposal to Allāh, as a result of which the record sheets *[ṣuḥuf]* will fly up into the air—and fall into the hands of the people assembled at the place of Resurrection. One person will have his record given to him in his right hand, another will have his record given to him in his left hand, and yet another will have his record given to him behind his back.

As for those who receive their records with their right hands, they will be granted a light from the Light of their Lord, and the angels will congratulate them on their mark of honor. They will then pass over the Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]*, through the mercy of their Lord, and proceed to enter their Gardens of Paradise. Their guardians will be waiting to meet them at the gates of their Gardens of Paradise, ready to present them with their garments and their riding mounts, and to equip them with all the finery that will suit them best.

They will then disperse to their respective dwellings, and gleefully make tracks toward their palatial mansions, where they will enter into the company of their spouses. They will see sights that their tongues could never have described, that their eyes have never beheld, and the very idea of which has never occurred to their hearts. They will eat and drink, and put on their fine new clothes and ornaments. They will then embrace their spouses, to the utmost extent of which they are capable.

Then they will offer praise to their Creator *[Khāliq]*, who has banished their sorrow from them, replaced their sense of anxiety with a feeling of security, and made their reckoning an easy matter for them to undergo. Then they will express their gratitude for all that their Lord has bestowed upon them. They will say: "Praise be to Allāh *[al-ḥamdu li'llāh]*, who has guided us to this, for we could not have guided ourselves, if Allāh had not guided us." They will be highly delighted when they recognize the provisions they have obtained from their life in this lower world, for they were people of conviction *[mūqinīn]*, people of faith *[mu'minīn]*, believers in the truth *[muṣaddiqīn]*, people whose fears and hopes

Suddenly, while they are busily indulging in their sensual pleasures and enjoying their merry delight, the gateway of the King Most Holy *[al-Malik al-Quddūs]*—that is to say, the gateway of the Garden of Eden *[Jannat 'Adn]*—will open unto them. The sound of the voices of spiritual beings *[rūḥāniyyīn]*, arrayed in ranks, will then issue forth from the Garden of Eden, vibrantly hymning the praises of the All-Generous and Nobly Exalted One *[tamājīd al-Mājid al-Karīm]* to all the ascending levels of the Gardens of Paradise *[darajāt al-Jinān]*. A wind of Eden will begin to blow, wafting forth all kinds of sweet perfume, spreading the breath of life, and fanning the gentle breeze *[nasīm]*—that is to say, the gentle breeze of nearness [to the Lord].

In the wake of this, a light will shine, and its radiance will shed a brilliant glow upon their charming meadows, their pavilions, and the banks of their rivers and streams. Every single thing that belongs to them will be filled with light. Then the Majestic One (Magnificent is His Majesty) *[al-Jalīl—jalla Jalālu-hu]* will call out to them from up above their heads:

"Peace be upon you *[as-salāmu 'alaikum]*, My dear ones *[aḥibbā'ī]*, My saintly friends *[auliyā'ī]* and My chosen ones *[aṣfiyā'ī]*! O people of the Garden of Paradise, how did you find your recreational park *[muntazah]*? This is your special day, in lieu of the New Year's Day *[Nairūz]* of My enemies. They tried to find a special day in the world below, in order to freshen and renew for themselves the blissful happiness which they had spoiled for themselves on account of their wicked conduct and their wretched behavior. But they failed to obtain the pleasure they were seeking.

"They incurred nothing but loss, instead of what they sought to acquire immediately, in the temporal realm *[fi 'l-'ājil]*, and they were too impatient to wait until they could obtain all this, which I had prepared in the realm of the future *[fi 'l-ājil]*, for the benefit of those who were faithfully committed to obeying Me. You turned your backs on all that they found so intensely interesting, and you refused to get involved in matters that stir up rivalry and mutual competition among people addicted to the lower world. Ah well, today they are tasting the evil consequences of that which spurred them to compete with one another in such pointless rivalry.

He continued (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> When the wretched people notice that the keepers have come out from Hell, and when they set eyes upon their fetters and their gear, they will start biting their own hands. They will eat their fingernails, then cry out in distress as their blood comes gushing forth. Their feet will shake and stumble, and they will despair of anything good. Then Allāh (Exalted is He) will give the order: "Seize them and tie them up, then roast them on the blazing Fire *[Jahīm]*, then bind them securely in chains!"

He went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Whenever Allāh wishes to cast a group of people into those layers [of Hell], He summons their keepers and says to them: "Seize these people!" Seventy angels immediately rush toward each individual member of the group concerned. They tighten their bonds, putting heavy shackles on their necks and fixing chains through their noses. This causes them to be throttled, and their spinal columns are also broken to pieces, since their forelocks are bent over behind their backs and tied to their feet.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Once they have been subjected to this treatment, their eyes will become glazed, their jugular veins will be inflated, the flesh of their necks will be scorched, and their blood vessels will be stripped bare. The heat of the shackles will burn into their heads, causing their brains to boil. Their brains will then spill out onto their outer layers of skin and trickle down to their feet. This will cause their outer layers of skin to peel off, and the fleshy parts beneath to turn green, as the pus flows out of them.
>
> When the shackles are placed on their necks, they will fill the whole area between their shoulders and their ears. Their fleshy parts will therefore be scorched, their lips will be hacked to pieces, their teeth will be exposed like fangs, and their tongues will stick out as they utter noises and screams. Those shackles will gleam with the glow of soaring flames, the heat of which will flow through their veins like blood, leaving them hollow. Since the flames of the Fire of Hell will also be flowing through them, the heat of those shackles will reach their hearts. Detached from their strings, their hearts will move up till they reach their throats, and this will intensify their strangulation. Their voices will be cut off completely, and their outer layers of skin will totally disappear.
>
> Then, while they are in this condition, Allāh (Exalted is He) will command the keepers of Hell *[Jahannam]* to provide them with clothing. They will dress them at once in shirts and pants. These garments will be extremely dark black in color, reeking with the stench of decay, rough and coarse to the touch, and ablaze from the intensity of their heat. If they were set down on the mountains of the earth, they would cause them to melt away.

He continued (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Then Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will say to the keepers of Hell *[Jahannam]*: "Herd them away to their dwelling places!" They will thereupon

produce another set of chains, longer and coarser than those in which the people had already been firmly secured. Each of the angels will then take one of those chains and use it to bind all the members of one of the religious communities *[umma mina 'l-umam]* together. Then he will place the end of the chain over his shoulder and turn his back on them. Then he will set off with them, dragging them along with their faces on the ground.

In the rear of each religious community there will be a team of seventy thousand angels, prodding its members with goading irons until they drive them to Hell, at the brink of which they will bring them to a halt.

He went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

At this point the angels will say to them: "This is the Fire of Hell, the reality of which you were in the habit of denying. Is this mere sorcery, or can you not see? Now you must roast in it, so you may or may not have the patience to endure, but that will not make the slightest difference as far as you are concerned. You are simply being repaid for what you used to do."

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

As soon as they have been brought to a halt at the brink of Hell, its gates will be opened to admit them and its covering will be removed to expose its contents. Its Fire will blaze and burst forth in flames, and a terrible cloud of smoke will then emerge from it, together with a hail of sparks, as numerous as the stars in the sky. These sparks will fly up high into the sky, to the distance of a journey taking seventy years. Then all of this will come back down, to fall on the heads of the people in chains. The hair on their heads will thus be consumed by fire, and their skulls will be cracked and shattered.

He continued (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Then Hell will scream in the loudest voice it can muster: "Come here to me, O people of the Fire, come here to me! By the Might and Glory of my Lord, I shall most certainly inflict retribution upon you!" Then it will say: "Praise be to Allāh, who has made me angry on account of His anger, and who is using me to inflict retribution upon His enemies. My Lord, add heat to my heat, and add strength to my strength!"

He went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Yet another set of angels will then come forth from Hell, and each one among them will approach one of the religious communities *[umma mina 'l-umam]*. He will pick up the members of that community at his leisure, and then topple them facedown into Hell. This means that they will land on their heads—eventually, since they will go on falling for the distance of a journey taking seventy years, before they reach the peaks of the mountains of Hell.

To this he added (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Even when they finally reach the peaks of the mountains of Hell, they will not alight upon those peaks until each and every individual amongst them has had his skin stripped and replaced no less than seventy times.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The first meal they get to eat on those mountain peaks will be a meal consisting of the fruit called *az-zaqqūm*,[347] the heat of which is outwardly apparent, the bitterness of which is extremely intense, and the thorns of which are very many. While they are chewing that meal of theirs, the angels will suddenly come upon them, beating them with their goading irons till their bones are smashed to pieces. Then the angels will grab hold of them by their legs and fling them into Hell, so that they plunge headfirst for the distance of a journey taking seventy years, before landing on the outlying ridges of the mountains of Hell.

To this he added (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> They will not alight upon those outlying ridges, however, until each and every individual amongst them has had his skin stripped and replaced no less than seventy times.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> That meal of theirs will be stuck in their mouths, for they will find it impossible to swallow and stomach. The food will thus combine with the heart to form a lump in the area of the gullet, causing a choking sensation. Each and every individual amongst them will then appeal for help in the form of something to drink. It will suddenly become apparent to them that, within those mountain ridges, there are river valleys streaming into Hell, so they will set off walking until they reach them, at which point they will bend down over them and attempt to drink the liquid they contain.

He continued (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The result of this will be that the skin is stripped from their faces, to be carried away in the current. They will find that it is actually impossible to drink from those streams, and so they will turn around and try to move away from them. The angels will be catching up with them, however, while they are still bending over those springs, and they will flog them till their bones are smashed to pieces. Then they will grab hold of them by their legs and fling them into Hell, so that they plunge headfirst for the distance of a journey taking one hundred and forty years, through blazing flames and a terrible cloud of smoke, before landing in those river valleys.

To this he added (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> They will not alight upon those river valleys, however, until each and every individual amongst them has had his skin stripped and replaced no less than seventy times.

He went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The ultimate destination of the liquid that flows from those mountain springs is down in those river valleys. They will try to drink from it, but only to find that it is the fluid of Hell's inferno *[mā' al-Jahīm]*. It will not settle in their stomachs until Allāh has stripped and replaced the skin of each and every individual amongst them no less than seventy times.

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[347] See note 167 on p. 125 above.

Concerning the preconditions of repentance *[tawba]* and the manner in which it must be carried out.

As for the preconditions that must be satisfied before repentance *[tawba]* can be valid, they are three in number:

1. The penitent must feel remorse *[nadam]* for all the transgressions he has ever committed. This is based on the clear statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Remorse is a form of repentance *[an-nadam tawba]*.

The symptoms that most clearly indicate the genuine quality of remorse are: (a) the delicate sensitivity *[riqqa]* of the heart, and (b) the copious shedding of tears.

This explains the significance of the saying attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> You must sit in the company of those who repent *[at-tawwābīn]*, for they are very tenderhearted *[araqq af'ida]*.

2. The renunciation of all forms of misbehavior *[zallāt]* under all circumstances and at all times.

3. The strong determination never to repeat the acts of disobedience *[ma'āṣī]* and the sinful errors *[khaṭī'āt]* of which one has previously been guilty.

This is the import of the response given by Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī, when someone asked him a question about sincere repentance *[tawba naṣūḥ]*,[175] for he said: "It means that no trace of sinful disobedience remains attached to the person who is repenting, neither in private nor in public. When someone's repentance is sincere, he is not the least bit worried about anything that may lie in store for him that night or the morning after."

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[175] The questioner was obviously alluding to the expression used by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), when He says in the Qur'ān:

> O you who believe, turn to Allāh in repentance—in sincere repentance! (66:8)

> shackles on his neck and iron fetters on his legs—and if his fellow creatures were then to catch sight of him, they would certainly flee from him and run as far away from him as they possibly could.

The traditional report continues:

> Due to the intensity of the heat of the Fire of Hell, its grievous affliction, the varied range of its torment, and the narrowness of its dwelling places, the fleshy parts of its inhabitants will turn green, their bones will split and crack, their brains will boil and pour down over their outer layers of skin. As their skin is burned away, their limbs will be cut off at the joints. Then, as the pus oozes out from their dismembered limbs, their bodies will come to be riddled with maggots and worms. Those maggots and worms will soon grow so fat that they come to resemble the wild ass. They will also develop claws, and those claws of theirs will be just like the talons of vultures and eagles. They will burrow into the areas between the outer skin and the flesh of their victims, and rip them to shreds. They will give out a moaning sound in the process, and they will scurry to and fro, just as a frightened wild animal scurries to and fro. They will eat their victims' flesh and drink their blood, for they have no other form of food and drink.
>
> The angels will come and seize those people, then drag them along with their faces down on the live coals and stones, which stick out from the ground as if they were teeth. They will keep dragging them along until they reach the ocean of Hell *[Jahannam]*. This means covering the distance of a journey taking seventy years, so they will not reach it until all their joints are broken, nor without having their skins stripped and replaced no fewer than seventy thousand times each day. When the angels finally bring them to their destination, they will hand them over to the keepers of the ocean of Hell, who will immediately grab them by their legs and shove them into it. No one knows the depth of that ocean, except the One who created it.

According to some accounts, the following description is recorded in one of the books of the Torah *[asfār at-Tawrāh]*:

> The ocean of this world, by comparison with the ocean of Hell, is like a small well on the shore of the ocean of this world. So, when they are thrown into it, and experience the first touch of the torment it has to offer, they will say to one another: "As it seems now, the torment inflicted upon us before this was actually a form of gentle clemency."

The traditional report continues:

> They will sink down once, before rising again to the surface. Then the ocean will boil, as it plunges them down to a depth of seventy fathoms. The distance of each fathom will be equivalent to the distance of the East from the West. Then the angels will herd them together with their goading irons, beating them with these sharp rods and driving them back down to the very bottom of the ocean, to the distance of a journey taking seventy years. Their only food and drink will be what the ocean provides, so they will rise back up from its lowest depth, covering the distance of a journey taking one hundred and forty years.

On reaching the surface, one of them will wish to pause for breath, so the angels will approach him with their goading irons, rushing toward him in order to give him a beating. This time, however, he will remember that, if he raises his head, seventy thousand goading irons will be aimed at that head of his. Since none of them ever misses its target, they will send him back down to a depth of seventy fathoms, each fathom being equivalent to the distance of the East from the West.

The traditional report continues further:

They will stay in the ocean of Hell for as long as Allāh wills that this state of affairs should last. In the meantime, their flesh and bones will be eaten away, so that only their spirits survive. They will eventually be struck by a wave that rolls them along for seventy years, then casts them ashore on one of the beaches of the ocean of Hell. On that beach there are seventy thousand caves, and deep inside each cave there are seventy thousand crevices. Each of those crevices extends as far as a journey lasting seventy years, and lurking deep inside each crevice there are seventy thousand snakes. The length of each of those snakes is seventy cubits, and each of those snakes has seventy sharp fangs. Within each of those fangs there is a flask of poison, and lurking inside the jaws of each of those snakes there are a thousand scorpions. Each of those scorpions has seventy vertebrae, and in each of those veretbrae there is a flask of poison.

The traditional report goes on to tell us:

Once their spirits have finally come ashore from that ocean of Hell, and have found their way into those caves, they will be provided with new bodies and new skins. Then they will be shackled in iron, at which point those serpents and scorpions will come out and attack them. Each and every individual amongst them will find that he has seventy thousand snakes and seventy thousand scorpions clinging to him. They will have no choice but to endure this onslaught with patience. Then the snakes and scorpions will climb up to their knees, and they will again have no choice but to endure the onslaught with patience. Then the snakes and scorpions will climb up to their chests, so they will yet again endure with patience. Then the snakes and scorpions will climb up to their collarbones, and patient endurance will once again be their only response. Then the snakes and scorpions will climb up higher still, attaching themselves to their noses, their lips, their teeth and their ears. At this point they will begin to panic, but they have nowhere to turn for refuge, except by running away into Hell, so into Hell they will tumble. As for the serpents, meanwhile, they will be chewing their flesh and sucking their blood, and as for the scorpions, they will be stinging them so hard that their fleshy parts will drop off piece by piece, and their limbs will be cut off at the joints. Even when they have tumbled into the Fire of Hell, it will take seventy years for the Fire to burn them clear of the poison injected into their systems by all those serpents and scorpions.

The traditional report continues:

Then the Fire of Hell will burn them for seventy years, at the end of which time they will be equipped with new skins, different from the skins they had before. Then they will beg to be supplied with food, so the angels will bring them a

> special meal, ironically called "the wedding feast *[al-walima]*," which is actually as dry and as hard as iron. They will attempt to chew it, but they will find it quite impossible to eat the slightest morsel of it, so they will spit it out of their mouths. They will then set about devouring their own hands, as the only way to satisfy the extreme intensity of their hunger. They will begin by eating their fingertips and their palms. Once they have eaten those, they will start on their forearms and eat them too, as far as their elbows. Then they will start on their elbows, and go on eating all the way up to their shoulders, until only the tips of their shoulders are left uneaten. If they could get their mouths to reach any part of their bodies after that, they would certainly eat that part as well! After they have done all this to their bodies, however, they will be suspended from the tree called *az-zaqqum*,[349] by means of iron flesh-hooks attached to their Achilles' tendons *['araqib]*.

The traditional report continues further:

> Seventy thousand of them will be suspended from a single branch, with their heads hanging downward, yet this will not cause the branch to bend. Then the blazing inferno will be ignited beneath them, and the heat of the Fire of Hell will rise to scorch their faces. This will go on for a period of seventy years, so that their bodies will melt away and only their spirits will survive intact.
>
> Then they will be supplied with fresh skins and new bodies. But then they will be suspended once again, this time by their fingertips, with the flames of the Fire of Hell beneath them. Those flames will rise and penetrate inside them through their buttocks, consuming their hearts before eventually emerging from their noses, their mouths and their ears. This process will also go on for a period of seventy years, so that their bones and their flesh will melt away and only their spirits will survive intact.
>
> Then they will be granted a brief respite, while they are supplied with fresh skins and new bodies. But then they will be suspended once again, this time by their eyes, for the same length of time and with similar consequences.
>
> They will not cease to be tormented in this fashion, until there is not one joint in their bodies by which they have yet to be suspended, and not a single hair on their heads by which they have yet to be left dangling. Even though death approaches them from every joint in their bodies, they will not turn into lifeless corpses, while yet another ghastly torment is lying in wait behind them. Finally, when this particular form of punishment has been inflicted on them in every detail, the angels will bring them down from the branch of the tree. They will then take each and every individual amongst them off to his dwelling place, shackled with a chain and dragged along with his face to the ground.

The traditional report goes on to tell us:

> The dimensions of their dwelling places in Hell will be commensurate with their wicked deeds. One of them, for instance, will be assigned to a lodging the length of which is equal to a month-long journey, and the width of which is similar. A fire will be ignited in it, and no one else will share it with him. Another of them, meanwhile, will be assigned to a lodging of which both the

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[349] See note 167 on p. 125 above.

length and width correspond to a journey of only twenty-nine nights. Yet others will be assigned to progressively smaller and narrower lodgings, till the point is reached where one of them is given a lodging that measures the equivalent of a one-day journey in both length and width.

The torments inflicted on them will match the size of their lodgings, so they will be in several different postures while receiving their punishment. One of them will take his punishment while standing on his head. One of them will take his punishment in a sitting position. One of them will take his punishment while squatting down on his knees. One of them will take his punishment while standing on his legs. One of them will take his punishment while sprawled out flat on his belly. In each of these lodgings, the breathing space available to the occupants will be narrower than the tip of a spear.

The height of the fire inside the various lodgings will also vary. In one case, the fire will reach up to the ankles of the occupant. One of them will be in fire up to his knees. One of them will be in fire up to his waist. One of them will be in fire up to his navel. One of them will be in fire up to his collar bone. One of them will be completely immersed in a flood of fire, which will sometimes lift him up to the surface, and sometimes spin him around, as it plunges him down into its depths to the distance of a month-long journey.

Once they have settled into their dwelling places, they will all link up with their comrades, and weep until their tears run dry. Then they will shed tears of blood, to the point where ships could be launched in the current of their tears.

The traditional report continues:

They will have one day to spend together in the pit of the blazing inferno, after which there will never be another opportunity for them to congregate. When Allāh gives permission on that day, a herald will cry out in the pit of the blazing inferno, and his voice will be heard by those at the very top and those at the very bottom, by those who are nearest to the center and those who are at the farthest edge. This is what is called the Gathering *[al-Ḥashr]*. The herald will say: "O people of the Fire of Hell, assemble together!" In response to this summons, they will all assemble together in the pit of the blazing inferno of Hell *[al-Jaḥīm]*, accompanied by the tormenting angels *[zabāniya]*.[350]

The traditional report goes on to tell us:

The people of the Fire of Hell will then start arguing with one another. Those who used to be despised will say to those who were scornful: "We used to be your followers in the world below.[351]

So will you be of any help to us at all in the face of Allāh's punishment?" (14:21)	*fa-hal antum mughnūna 'an-nā* *min 'adhābi 'llāhi min shai'.*

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[350] See note 102 on p. 73 above.

[351] A slightly paraphrased version of the Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*:

Then the weak will say to those who were proud: "We used to be your followers." (14:21)	*fa-qāla 'd-du'afā'u* *li'lladhīna 'stakbarū* *innā kunnā la-kum taba'an.*

Those who were proud will say:

"Every one of us is in it; indeed,	*innā kullun fī-hā*
Allāh has already passed judgment	*inna 'llāha qad ḥakama*
on His servants." (40:48)	*baina 'l-'ibād.*

Those who were proud will also say to those who used to be despised: "You may turn to us for help, but for you there is no word of welcome here!" Those who used to be despised will then say to those who were proud:

"No, you are the ones for whom	*bal antum*
there is no word of welcome!	*lā marḥaban bi-kum:*
You prepared this for us in advance,	*antum qaddamtumū-hu la-nā:*
and how evil is the outcome!"	*fa-bi'sa 'l-qarār.*
(38:60)	

Those who used to be despised will take exception to hearing this from those who were proud, and they will say:

Our Lord, whoever did prepare this	*Rabba-nā man qaddama*
for us, be sure to give him a double	*la-nā hādhā fa-zid-hu*
portionof torment in the Fire of Hell!	*'adhāban ḍi'fan fi 'n-nār.*
(38:61)	

In response to this, those who were proud will say:

"If Allāh had guided us aright,	*law hadā-na 'llāhu*
we would surely have guided	*la-hadainā-kum.*
you aright." (14:21)	

Those who used to be despised will then say to those who were proud: "Not so! [You were only interested in your] scheming by night and day, when you were instructing us to disbelieve in Allāh, and to set up rivals in competition with Him. (34:33). This means that we are untainted by you, and that we are innocent of the things you invited us to do in the lower world."

The traditional report continues:

Then all of them will turn toward the devils *[shayāṭīn]* who are their fellow inmates, and the latter will tell them: "We led you into error, as we tempted you and lured you away from the right path." Eventually, when they have finished saying what they have to say on this subject, Satan himself *[ash-Shaiṭān]* will proclaim, in a high-pitched voice peculiar to him:

"Allāh surely promised you a promise of truth (14:22), and Allāh summoned you, but you did not respond to His call, and you did not believe that His promise was true.

"I made you a promise, too, but then I let you down, for I had no authority over you, except that I called to you and you obeyed me. So do not lay the blame on me, but blame yourselves. I cannot come to your aid, nor can you be of any assistance to me (14:22), for I am quite ungrateful, on this day, for the fact that you rendered worshipful service to me, instead of to Allāh."

The traditional report continues, citing the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And then a herald in between them	*fa-adhdhana mu'adhdhinun*

will cry out: "The curse of Allāh	*baina-hum an la'natu 'llāhi*
is on the evildoers!" (7:44)	*'ala 'ẓ-ẓālimīn.*

Then the traditional report goes on to tell us:

> At this point, those who used to be despised will curse those who were proud, and those who were proud will curse those who used to be despised. All of them will curse the devils who are their fellow inmates, and their fellow inmates will curse them in return. Then they will say to those fellow inmates of theirs: "If only we were separated from you by the distance that separates the two horizons from each other—for you are evil companions[352] for us today, just as you were evil ministers *[wuzarā']* for us in the lower world."
>
> When it finally dawns on them that they are all lumped together in a single congregation, they will start saying to one another: "Come on! Let us go and look for the custodians of this place. Perhaps they will intercede on our behalf in the presence of their Lord, so that He may relieve us of the torment for a day."[353]

The traditional report continues further:

> In spite of this, however, they will continue to suffer torment. The keepers of Hell will stay out of their reach for as long as seventy years, and then, when they eventually come around to them, they will say:

"Did your Messengers not come	*a-wa-lam taku ta'tī-kum*
to you with clear proofs?" (40:50)	*rusulu-kum bi-'l-baiyināt.*

> "Yes indeed,"[354] they will all respond together, whereupon the keepers of Hell will say:

"Then make your plea,	*fa-'d'ū:*
although the pleading	*wa mā du'ā'u 'l-kāfirīna*
of the unbelievers is in vain."	*illā fī ḍalāl.*
(40:50)	

Then, according to the same traditional report:

> When they see that the keepers of Hell will not do them any good, they will turn to the angel Mālik[355] with their next appeal for help, as they cry:
>
> "O Mālik, let your Lord make an end of us! (43:77) Let Him finally put us to death!"

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[352] Up to this point, the sentence beginning "If only..." is almost identical—except that the pronouns and one noun are in the plural instead of the singular—with the Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* in which Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

Till, when he comes to Us, he says:	*ḥattā idhā jā'a-nā qāla*
"If only I were separated from you	*yā laita*
by the distance that separates	*bainī wa baina-ka*
the two horizons from each other—	*bu'da 'l-mashriqaini:*
for you are an evil companion." (43:38)	*fa-bi'sa 'l-qarīn.*

[353] *yukhaffif 'an-nā yauman mina 'l-'adhāb.* This last phrase in the sentence is a direct quotation from the Qur'ān (40:49).

[354] The response "Yes indeed *[balā]!*" is a quotation from the same verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān (40:50).

[355] The literal meaning of the Arabic word *mālik* is 'someone in authority; an owner or possessor.' Mālik is the name of the angel who presides over Hell, superintending the torments inflicted on its occupants.

> Mālik will keep them waiting for as long as it would take to travel the world, withholding his answer and declining to give them any response. Then, when he finally condescends to address them, it will be to say:
>
> "You will have to linger on (43:77) for many aeons of time, before He finally puts you to death."
>
> When they see that Mālik will not do them any good, they will address their appeal for help directly to their Lord. To Him they will say:

"Our Lord, bring us forth out of it!	*Rabba-nā akhrij-nā min-hā*
Then, if we revert,	*fa-in 'udnā*
we shall be evildoers indeed."	*fa-innā ẓālimūn.*
(23:107)	

> —That is to say, "if we revert to our former habit of disobeying You."

Then, as the traditional report goes on to tell us:

> The All-Compelling One *[al-Jabbār]* (Glory be to Him and Exalted is He) will keep them waiting for as long as seventy years. During all that time, He will neither respond to their request nor provide them with any benefit. Then, when He finally does reply to them in His own words, He will reduce them to the status of dogs, for He will say:

"Slink away into it,	*[qāla] 'khsa'ū fī-hā*
and do not speak to Me." (23:108)	*wa lā tukallimūn.*

The traditional report continues further:

> When they see that their Lord will not bestow His mercy on them, and that He will not grant them any favor, they will say to one another, referring to their torment:

"It is all the same for us whether	*sawā'un 'alai-nā*
we writhe in agony, or whether we	*a-jazi'nā*
patiently endure;	*am ṣabarnā*
we have no place of refuge. (14:21)	*mā la-nā min maḥīṣ.*
Now we have no intercessors,	*fa-mā la-nā min shāfi'īn:*
nor any loyal friend.	*wa lā ṣadīqin*
If only we could have	*ḥamīm:*
another turn [on earth],	*fa-law anna la-nā karratan*
so that we might be numbered	*fa-nakūna*
among the believers!" (26:100–102)	*mina 'l-mu'minīn.*

The traditional report recounts what will happen to them next:

> Then, as the angels are taking them away to their dwelling places, their feet will slip and stumble. Any argument they try to make will be refuted, and they will see what their Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) has in store for them. They will lose all hope of His mercy, and their sense of despair will throw them into a state of terrible distress. A profound awareness of shame and degradation will descend upon them, so they will sadly bemoan the loss of all the opportunities they squandered in the course of their worldly lives.

> As well as having their own heavy burdens loaded on their necks, they will also have to carry the burdens of those who used to be their followers and attendants, without the slightest reduction in those burdens of theirs. Their torments will be more numerous than the specks of dust on the earth and the drops of water in the oceans. They will be accompanied by some of the guardians of Hell *[zabāniya]*,[156] whose orders are abrupt, whose manner of speaking is harsh and crude, whose bodies are as prodigious as the lightning in the sky, whose faces are like live coals, whose eyes are like flames, whose coloring is dark and gloomy, whose teeth and nails are like the horns of cattle. The goading irons they hold in their hands are long, heavy and fiercely hot; if they used them to strike the mountains, the mountains would be split asunder by the force of the blow, then crumble like rotten old bones. The guardians of Hell will use these instruments to beat the sinners who have disobeyed their Lord, so those sinners will have every reason to shed tears of blood, once their ordinary tears have run dry. They may plead with their tormentors, but their pleas will go unanswered. They may weep and sob for mercy, but the *zabāniya* will show them no compassion. They may beg for a drink of cold water, but the only liquid they get from the guardians of Hell will be a kind of pus that roasts their faces.

According to the same traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to say:

> An enormous cloud will gather each day, then drift over the people of the Fire of Hell. The flashes of lightning from it will dazzle their eyes, its thunder will crash down on their backs, and it will cast a gloom so dense that they cannot even see their hellish guardians. Then the cloud will proclaim, in its own peculiar booming voice: "O people of the Fire of Hell, would you not like me to give you a shower of rain?" They will all respond in chorus: "Shower us with cold water!" But the cloud will subject them for an hour to a hail of stones, which will fall on their heads and smash their skulls to pieces. Then it will rain upon them for another hour, this time with streams of boiling water, live coals in great abundance, smokeless flames of fire, and sharp hooks of iron. Then, for the next hour, it will shower them with snakes, scorpions, maggots and worms, and filthy slime.

The traditional report continues:

> Whenever it rains in Hell *[Jahannam]*, the ocean of Hell becomes full to overflowing, so its depths begin to surge in waves and it heaves in a mighty rage. It leaves neither shore nor mountain in Hell uncovered by its rising tide, and so it submerges all the people of the Fire, although they do not die.

The traditional report continues further:

> The torments of Hell *[Jahannam]* will thus become worse and worse for those disobedient sinners, as conditions there become more and more extreme in every respect. Since they have incurred the retribution of their Lord, those who are doomed to reside there must suffer increasing degrees of harshness, heat, wailing and moaning, fire and smoke, darkness and gloom, stress and strain, poisonous fumes, boiling water, blazing and scorching flames, and every kind of agony.

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[156] See note 102 on p. 73 above.

Let us therefore take refuge from it with Allāh—and from the deeds that lead to it, as well as from the companionship of its people! O Allāh, our Lord and its Lord, do not cause us to arrive within its confines! Do not place its shackles upon our necks! Do not clothe us with its garments! Do not feed us with its bitter fruit called *az-zaqqūm*,[357] and do not make us drink its boiling liquid! Do not put its keepers in charge of us! Do not treat us as fuel for its fire! By Your mercy, enable us instead to cross safely over its Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]*, and deflect its sparks and flames away from us, in order that You may deliver us, through Your mercy, from it and from its smoke, and from its grief and its torment. Āmīn, O Lord of All the Worlds!

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also used to say:

> If even the least impressive door of Hell were to be opened in the West, it would cause the mountains of the East to evaporate, just as drops of rain evaporate in the heat of the sun. If even a single spark from Hell were to fly out and fall in the West, while a man was in the East, his brain would boil and spill out over his body.
>
> Among all the inhabitants of the Fire of Hell, those who suffer the mildest torment are men who are forced to wear shoes made of fire, which emerges through their ears and their noses, and which causes their brains to boil. Next come those who are hurled down onto one of the rocks of Hell, so that they bounce off it, just as a grain of corn bounces out of a hot frying pan, and each time they fall off one rock they land upon another.

This means that all the inhabitants of the Fire of Hell are made to suffer torments commensurate with the wickedness of their respective deeds. Let us therefore take refuge with Allāh from their deeds and their destination!

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> As for the torment inflicted on those who do not protect their private parts, they will be suspended by their genital organs for as long as they lived in this world, so that their physical bodies will disintegrate completely and only their spirits will survive intact. Then they will be released, to be equipped with new bodies and fresh skins. Then they will be tormented all over again. Every individual amongst them will be flogged by seventy thousand angels, for a period corresponding to his lifetime in this world, so that their physical bodies will disintegrate completely and only their spirits will survive intact. Such will be their punishment.
>
> As for the torment inflicted on the thief, he will be dismembered limb by limb, then put together again. That will be the extent of his punishment, except that each individual among the class of thieves will also be assaulted by seventy thousand angels, armed with large razor blades.

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[357] See note 167 on p. 125 above.

> As for the torment inflicted on those who give false witness, they will be suspended by their tongues. Then each individual amongst them will be flogged by seventy thousand angels, so that their physical bodies will disintegrate completely and only their spirits will survive intact.
>
> As for the torment inflicted on those who attribute partners to Allāh [*al-mushrikīn*], they will be lodged in the cavern of Hell, which will then be sealed to keep them from escaping. Inside that cavern, they will find themselves in the midst of snakes, scorpions, many live coals, and fierce flames and smoke. Every hour, each individual amongst them will have his skin stripped and renewed no fewer than seventy thousand times.
>
> As for the torment inflicted on cruel and arrogant tyrants, they will be placed in coffins made of fire. Then locks will be fastened to keep them inside, and the coffins will be deposited in the lowest tier of the Fire of Hell. Every hour, each individual amongst them will be subjected to ninety-nine different kinds of torment. Each of them will have his skin stripped and renewed a thousand times every day. Such will be their punishment.

According to the traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) went on to say:

> As for those who are guilty of the betrayal of trust, they will bring their trickery with them. Then they will be thrown into the ocean of Hell [*Jahannam*]. To ensure that they go down all the way to the very bottom of it—the depth of which is known to none but the One who created it—they will then be told: "You must dive down deep, in order to get rid of your fraudulent deceit!"
>
> On hearing this, they will dive as deep as Allāh wills. Then they will return to the surface, sticking their heads out as they gasp for breath. At this point, however, each one of them will be assailed immediately by seventy thousand angels, each of them armed with a goading prong made of iron, ready to be swung against his head. Such will be their punishment forever.

According to the same traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also used to say:

> Allāh has condemned the people of the Fire of Hell to remain in it for aeons [*aḥqāb*]. While I do not know how many those aeons will be, I can tell you that a single aeon [*ḥuqb*] is a period of eighty thousand years, and that a year is three hundred and sixty days. In the context of Hell, however, one day is the equivalent of a thousand years by your reckoning.

Woe, therefore, to the people of the Fire of Hell! Woe to those faces—those faces that used to regard the heat of the sun as more than they could bear—at the time when the Fire is scorching them! Woe to those heads—those heads that used to regard an ordinary headache as more than they could bear—at the time when Hell's boiling water [*ḥamīm*] is being poured on top of them! Woe to those eyes—those eyes that used to regard ophthalmia [*ramad*] as more than they could bear—

at the time when they are losing their color and glazing over within the Fire of Hell! Woe to those ears—those ears that used to take such delight in listening to gossip and scandal—at the time when the flames are flaring out of them! Woe to those noses—those noses that used to twitch in discomfort at the smell of decaying corpses—at the time when they are having to inhale the Fire of Hell! Woe to those necks—those necks that used to regard the slightest ache or pain as more than they could bear—at the time when shackles are being fastened to them! Woe to those skins—those skins that used to regard coarse clothing material as more than they could bear—at the time when they are being clad in garments made from a fiery material that is coarse indeed to the touch, that gives off a stinking odor, and that is smoldering with fire! Woe to those bellies—those bellies that used to regard an ordinary stomach-ache as more than they could bear—at the time when the bitter fruit called *az-zaqqūm*,[358] combined with boiling water, is entering inside them and cutting their intestines to pieces! Woe to those feet—those feet that used to regard the slightest soreness as more than they could bear—at the time when they are being forced to wear shoes made of fire!

Woe to the people of the Fire of Hell, in all their varied torments! O Allāh, by virtue of this stupendous knowledge, and of Your universal grace and favor, do not cause us to be numbered among its inhabitants!

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[358] See note 167 on p. 125 above.

On crossing the bridge of Hell and entering the Garden of Paradise, as explained by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in a traditional report that has been handed down to us on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

According to Abū Huraira[359] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to say:

> The bridge of Hell [*jisr Jahannam*] has seven arches. The distance between each pair of arches is equal to that of a journey taking seventy years, while the width of the bridge is like the sharp edge of a sword. The first group of people will cross over it as quickly as it takes to blink an eye. The second group, at the speed of a brief flash of lightning. The third group, at the speed of a violent gust of wind. The fourth group, at the speed of birds. The fifth group, at the speed of horses. The sixth group, at the speed of a man in a hurry. As for the seventh group, they will cross over it at an ordinary walking pace.
>
> When all seven groups have crossed over, one man will still be waiting, which means that he will be the very last to cross that bridge. "Cross over!" he will be told, so he will set his two feet upon it, but one of them will slip. Then he will straddle the bridge and try crawling along it on his knees, but the Fire of Hell will lick at his hair and his skin as he does so.
>
> He will continue to wriggle along on his belly, for his other foot will slip, leaving him with one hand holding fast, while the other hand dangles loose. The Fire of Hell will attack him in that position, so he will suppose that he has no chance of escaping from its clutches. Nevertheless, he will continue to wriggle along on his belly, until he finally succeeds in getting beyond its reach. As soon as he is clear of it, he will look at it and say: "Blessed be the One who has delivered me from you! I cannot imagine that my Lord has ever given anyone, in ancient or modern times, the likes of what He has given me! He did indeed deliver me from you, after I had seen you and met you face to face!"
>
> One of the angels will then approach him, take him by the hand, and lead him to a pond in front of the entrance to the Garden of Paradise. The angel will say to him: "Bathe yourself in this pond, and drink from it."

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[359] See note 226 on p. 163 above.

> He will thereupon bathe himself in the pond, and take a drink from it. As he does so, the sweet aroma of the people of the Garden of Paradise will keep wafting toward him, and he will catch glimpses of their many colors. Then the angel will lead him away and make him stand at the entrance to the Garden of Paradise, saying to him: "Stand here and wait, until you receive permission from your Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He)."
>
> While he is standing at the entrance to the Garden of Paradise, he will catch sight of the occupants of the Fire of Hell. He will also hear them howling like dogs, so he will weep as he pleads: "O my Lord, turn my face away from the people of the Fire of Hell. I shall never ask You, O my Lord, for any other favor!"
>
> That same angel will then come to him from the presence of the Lord of All the Worlds (Almighty and Glorious is He). The angel will move his face away from the Fire of Hell, and turn it around toward the Garden of Paradise.

From the same traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), we learn that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) went on to say:

> The spot where that man is obliged to stand and wait will be no more than a footstep away from the entrance to the Garden of Paradise, so he will find himself looking directly at the door of the Garden of Paradise. As he surveys its width, he will discover that the two side-posts of the door of the Garden of Paradise are very far apart—so far apart, in fact, that even the swiftest of birds would take forty years to fly from one of them to the other.
>
> That man will then make a request of his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), to whom he will say: "O my Lord, You have indeed treated me with the utmost kindness. You have delivered me from the Fire of Hell, and You have averted my face from the inhabitants of the Fire of Hell and turned it toward the Garden of Paradise. Between me and the door of the Garden of Paradise there is now but a single footstep, so I beg You, O my Lord, through Your Might and Glory, to let me enter the door! I shall not ask You for anything other than this. But do place a screen between me and the inhabitants of the Fire of Hell, so that I cannot hear the dreadful hissing sound it constantly emits, and so that I cannot see its occupants.
>
> That same angel will then come to him again from the presence of the Lord of All the Worlds (Almighty and Glorious is He). "O son of Adam," the angel will say, "you are so untrue to your word! Did you not insist that you would not ask for anything else?"
>
> The man will respond to this reproach by swearing: "No, by the Might and Glory of the Lord, I shall not ask for anything else!" The angel will thereupon take him by the hand and cause him to enter the door. Then the angel will fly away, returning to the presence of the Lord of All the Worlds (Almighty and Glorious is He).

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued:

> Now that he is inside the Garden of Paradise, that man will look to his right and to his left, as well as to his front, scanning an area that extends to the distance

2. The signs that indicate that the penitent has had his repentance accepted are also said to be four in number:

(a) The fact that he has severed all connection with immoral companions *[aṣḥāb al-fisq]*, since he now has too much self-respect to go on seeing them, and has taken instead to mingling with the righteous *[ṣāliḥīn]*.

(b) The fact that he has lost all interest in sin, and is now devoting all his energy to acts of worshipful obedience.

(c) The fact that the joy of this world has departed from his heart, and it is obvious that the sorrow of the hereafter is always in his heart.

(d) The fact that he sees no need to concern himself with that which Allāh has guaranteed to him, namely, his means of sustenance *[rizq]*, and he is therefore wholly devoted to the obedient fulfillment of whatever Allāh commands him to perform.

If these four signs are present in him, the penitent must surely be one of those of whom Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> Truly Allāh loves those who turn to Him repentant, and He loves those who keep themselves in purity. (2:222)

3. As for the obligations owed to the penitent by other people, these are also four in number:

(a) They must come to love him, because Allāh (Exalted is He) already loves him.

(b) They must support him with their prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*, beseeching Allāh to keep him steadfast in repentance.

(c) They must not reproach him for the sins he has committed in the past, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If someone reproaches a believer *[mu'min]* for a vile misdeed *[fāḥisha]*, he is [thereby offering himself as] an expiation for it, and Allāh (Exalted is He) is bound to make him commit that same offense himself. If someone reproaches a believer for a crime *[jarīra]*, he will not leave this world until he has committed it himself, and been disgraced because of it.

Besides, the believer does not fall into sin deliberately and on purpose, or because he is convinced that it is required of him as a religious duty! It only happens because of the enticement of the devil *[shaiṭān]*, the excessive ferocity of passionate desire, the intensity of lust, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) will then say to him: "What is the matter with you now? Have you no request to make of your Lord?"

Recovering his power of speech, the man will reply: "O my master, may Allāh bless you *[yā sayyidī, salla 'llāhu 'alaik]*! By Allāh, I have already given my oath to the Lord of Might and Glory *[Rabb al-'Izza]* on so many occasions that I now feel afraid of Him. I have asked Him for so much that I now feel a sense of shame."

At this point, the Lord of Might and Glory (Magnificent is His Majesty) will say to the man: "Will it please you if I gather the whole world—from the day when I created it till the day when I caused it to be no more—and put it all together for your sake, then multiply it ten times over for your benefit?"

That man will respond to this by saying: "O my Lord, can You be making fun of me, when You are the Lord of All the Worlds?" The Lord of Might and Glory (Majestic and Exalted is He) will then say to the man: "I am indeed Capable of doing it, so ask Me for whatever you wish!"

At this point, the man will say: "O my Lord, allow me to join the company of human beings!"

An angel will thereupon come and take him by the hand, then walk with him into the Garden of Paradise, until something becomes apparent to him—something the like of which he has never seen. At the sight of this apparition, he will immediately prostrate himself, saying in his posture of prostration: "My Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) has manifested Himself to me!" The angel will then say to him: "Lift up your head. This is your dwelling place, although it is only the least of your dwellings."

The man will then say: "If Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) had not made me close my eyes, they would have been completely dazzled by the radiant light of this palatial mansion."

While the man is proceeding to make himself at home in that palatial mansion, another man will come to meet him. At the sight of this person's face and clothing, he will be rendered speechless with astonishment, thinking that his visitor must be an angel. The newcomer will approach him, saying: "Peace be upon you, and Allāh's mercy and blessings *[as-salāmu 'alaik—wa rahmatu 'llāhi wa barakātuh]*! This is just the right moment for you to arrive here!" The first man will return his greeting of peace, then ask him: "Who are you, O servant of Allāh?" The other will reply: "I am a steward *[qahramān]* at your service. I have been appointed to manage this particular household, but you also have at your disposal a thousand other stewards like me, each of them in charge of one of your palatial mansions." You have a thousand palatial mansions in your possession, each with a staff of one thousand servants, as well as wives from among the brides of Paradise with those lovely eyes of theirs *[al-hūr al-'īn]*.[360]

On entering that palatial mansion of his, the man will discover that it has a dome, which has been carved out of a single pearl. He will find that there are seventy apartments inside the hollow interior of the dome, with seventy rooms inside each apartment. On closer inspection, he will notice that each room has seventy doors, and that each of those doors is equipped with its own dome of pearls. When he enters those domes, he will be the very first person to open them, since they have never been opened previously by any of Allāh's creatures.

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[360] See note 333 on p. 241 above.

At a certain point during his tour of the hollow interior of that great dome, lo and behold, he will suddenly find himself inside a dome that has been carved out of a precious red stone. It is seventy cubits in height, and has seventy doors. Each of those doors leads through to a precious stone, of similar height and likewise equipped with seventy doors. None of the precious stones is of the same color as the one next to it. Inside each of the precious stones there are spouses, bridal thrones *[manāṣṣ]*, and raised couches.

On entering the jeweled dome, the man will find a wife waiting there to receive him—one of the brides of Paradise with those lovely eyes of theirs *[al-ḥūr al-ʿīn]*. She will greet him at once with the Islāmic salutation, and he will give her the greeting of peace in return, but then he will stand rooted to the spot, too stunned to say another word. To put him at his ease, she will therefore say to him: "This is just the right time for you to visit us. I am your wife!"

When he looks into her face, the man will see his own face in hers, just as one of you might look at your face in the mirror, and see the reflection of its handsome features, its beauty and its fair complexion. She is decked out with seventy articles of clothing, each of them adorned with seventy colors, of which no two are alike. When looking at her from behind, he can see the calf of her leg. Whenever he moves to view her from a different angle, she becomes seventy times more beautiful in his eyes, for she is a mirror to him, and he is a mirror to her.

From the same traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), we learn that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) went on to say:

Each of those palatial mansions will be equipped with three hundred and sixty doors, and each of those three hundred and sixty doors will be surmounted by a dome made from a pearl, a sapphire, and some other kind of gem. None of those domes will be of the same color as the one next to it. When the owner surveys the area that stretches into the distance behind his palatial mansion, he will be viewing his own estate as far as his eye can see. When he sets out on a journey into that area, he will travel through his own estate for a hundred years, making a thorough inspection of everything he comes across along the way.

Whenever he takes up residence in one of his palatial mansions, the angels will come in to visit him through each and every gate, bearing the greeting of peace *[salām]* and bringing him gifts from the presence of the Lord of All the Worlds. Not one of those angels will come without bringing a set of gifts, and those gifts will always be different from the presents brought by any other angel. Every day, and all day long, the angels will come to salute him with the greeting of peace, and they will come bearing gifts. The proof of this is recorded in the Book of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), for He tells us:

And the angels will enter unto them	*wa 'l-malā'ikatu yadkhulūna*
by every gate, [saluting them with]:	*ʿalai-him min kulli bāb:*

"Peace be upon you, because	*salāmun ‘alai-kum*
you persevered with patience."	*bi-mā ṣabartum*
Fair indeed is the Ultimate Abode!	*fa-ni‘ma ‘uqba ’d-dār.*
(13:23,24)	

He has also told us (Exalted is He):

And there they shall have their	*wa la-hum rizqu-hum*
sustenance in the early morning	*fī-hā bukratan*
and in the evening. (19:62)	*wa ‘ashiyyā.*

According to Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also used to say:

> This man will be referred to as "that poor fellow" by the other inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise, on account of the superiority of their dwelling places over his, in spite of the fact that the "poor fellow" will have eighty thousand servants to wait on him at mealtimes! Whenever he feels an appetite for food, those servants will respond to his need by setting up one of the tables they keep ready for use on such occasions. The top slab of each of those tables is made from a red sapphire or ruby *[yāqūta ḥamrā’]*, set in a yellow sapphire or topaz *[yāqūta ṣafrā’]*, with a rim of pearls, sapphires and chrysolite or peridot *[zabarjad]*.[361] The legs of each table are made from pearls, and they have a circumference of twenty miles.
>
> As soon as this table has been set up, seventy different kinds of food will be laid out upon it, all for him to choose from. Eighty servants will be standing in front of him, ready to wait upon him. Each of those servants will be holding a plate of food and a glass containing something to drink. The food on each plate will be quite different from that on any other plate, and the drink in each glass will be quite different from that in any other glass. He will find the first to be just as tasty as the last, and he will find the last to be just as delicious as the first. He will compare them one with another, and he will not fail to sample each and every kind of food and drink.
>
> As far as the servants are concerned, every single one of them will be given his fair share of that food and drink, once it has been removed from the master's presence. Besides, there will not be a single one of them who does not have seventy-two wives from among the brides of Paradise with those lovely eyes of theirs *[al-ḥūr al-‘īn]*,[362] as well as two human wives *[ādamiyyatān]*. Each of those wives will have a palatial mansion, built from a green sapphire set inside a red one. There will be seventy thousand door panels in each of those palatial mansions, and each door panel will have its own dome, carved out of a pearl.
>
> Among all those wives, there will not be a single one who is not wearing seventy thousand articles of clothing, with seventy thousand colors in each article of clothing, and none of those articles of clothing will resemble any other. Among all those wives, furthermore, there will not be a single one who does not have a thousand maidservants in front of her, standing ready to attend to her needs, as well as seventy thousand maidservants to wait upon her in her private sitting room. Among all those maidservants, there will not be a single one whom she

[361] See note 81 on p. 61 above.

[362] See note 333 on p. 241 above.

> does not keep actively employed in attending to her needs. Whenever a meal has been prepared for her, seventy thousand maidservants will stand in front of her, each of them holding a plate of food and a glass containing something to drink, and none of these offerings will be like any other.
>
> The man may find himself longing to see a brother of his, someone he used to love for the sake of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) during his life in the world below. Prompted by concern for his brother's welfare, and fearing that he may have perished, the man will say: "I wish I knew what my brother So-and-So has been doing!" Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will be fully aware of what is in his heart, so He will instruct his angels by way of inspiration: "Convey this servant of Mine to his brother!" One of the angels will thereupon bring him a thoroughbred riding camel, saddled and padded with blankets of light.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued:

> The angel will salute him with the greeting of peace, so he will greet him with peace *[as-salām]* in return. Then the angel will tell him: "Get up and mount this camel! Away you go to find your brother!"
>
> The man will then proceed to mount the camel, and so he will set out on a journey through the Garden of Paradise. The distance he has to travel would take a thousand years on this earth, but he will cover it in less time than one of you would take to mount a thoroughbred camel and ride it for just one league *[farsakh]*.[363]
>
> Nothing will happen to him until he reaches the home of his brother. He will thereupon salute him with the greeting of peace, and his brother will greet him with peace *[as-salām]* in return, as he assures him that he is a very welcome guest. He will then say: "Where have you been, O my brother? I have been so concerned about about you!"
>
> Each of them will thereupon embrace the other, then both of them will say: "Praise be to Allāh, the One who has brought us together again!" The pair of them will go on praising Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) in the most beautiful voices ever heard by any human being.
>
> At this point, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will say to them: "O you two servants of Mine, this is not the time for serious work. This is rather the time for cheerful greetings and requests, so put your requests to Me, and I shall grant you both whatever you wish." In response to this offer, the pair of them will say: "O Lord, allow us to be together in this station [of Paradise]!"
>
> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will therefore cause that station [of Paradise] to be the place where they can settle down and make themselves at home *[majlis]*, in a tent encased in pearls and sapphires. Their wives will also be given a similar dwelling place, and so they will all proceed to drink, eat, and enjoy themselves.
>
> As soon as one of the men in the Garden of Paradise has taken a morsel of food and put it in his mouth, it may occur to him that he actually fancies a different

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[363] The *farsakh* [parasang, or league] is three miles of the Hāshimī measure, i.e. thirty bow-shots reckoning the bow-shot as four hundred cubits, or sixty bow-shots reckoning the bow shot as two hundred cubits. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *F–R–S–KH*.)

> kind of food. If this should happen, the morsel concerned would immediately change into whatever he really wanted to eat!

According to the same traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), somebody once asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, what makes up the ground of the Garden of Paradise?" To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Its ground is a kind of marble or alabaster slab [*rukhāma*] consisting of smooth silver, and its dust consists of musk. Its hills are of saffron, and its walls are made of pearls and sapphires, as well as of gold and silver. The outside of the walls can be seen from the area inside them, and their interior is likewise visible from their exterior. In the whole of the Garden of Paradise, there is not one palatial mansion of which the exterior is not visible from the interior, and the interior from the exterior.
>
> In the whole of the Garden of Paradise, furthermore, there will not be one man who is not dressed in a waist-wrapper [*izār*], an upper-body shawl [*ridā'*], and other garments, not one of which has been cut, and not one of which has been sewn. Nor will there be one man among them who is not wearing a crown, hollowed out of a large pearl, and studded with with smaller pearls, sapphires, and chrysolite or peridot [*zabarjad*].[364] He will have two plaited strands [*dafīratān*] of gold in his hair, and around his neck he will wear a collar of gold, encased in pearls and green sapphires. On the wrist of each and every man amongst them there will be three bracelets: a bracelet of gold, a bracelet of silver, and a bracelet of pearl. Beneath their crowns there will be diadems of pearls and sapphires. Over those garments of theirs they will be wearing fine silk brocade [*sundus*], and over that fine silk brocade there will also be thick silk brocade interwoven with gold [*istabraq*], as well as plain green silk.
>
> As for the cushions on which the people of the Garden of Paradise will be reclining in the greatest comfort, their inner surfaces consist of thick silk brocade interwoven with gold [*istabraq*], and their outer surfaces of beautiful multicolored carpeting [*'abqarī*]. The cushions are laid on raised couches, made of red sapphire, and these have pearls as their supports. Each and every one of those raised couches has a thousand decorative patterns, with seventy colors to each pattern, and no two patterns are alike. Seventy thousand rugs are spread out in front of each of those raised couches, with seventy colors to each rug, and not one of those rugs bears any resemblance to the one beside it. To the right of each of those raised couches there are seventy thousand pedestals, with an equal number to the left, and not one of those pedestals is similar to any other.

According to Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also used to say:

> The people of the Garden of Paradise in their entirety, the loftiest of them and the lowliest of them in spiritual rank, will be of the same physical height as Adam, and the physical height of Adam (peace be upon him) is sixty cubits

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[364] See note 81 on p. 61 above.

[dhirāʿ].[365] They will all be youthful, devoid of bodily and facial hair, anointed with kohl[366] and lined with charcoal around the eyes—they and their womenfolk to exactly to same extent.

When they have received all the special treatment thus far described, a herald will utter a proclamation within the Garden of Paradise. Raising his voice so that it can be heard by those at the loftiest and the lowliest levels, by those who are nearest to him, and by those who are farthest away, the herald will cry: "O people of the Garden of Paradise, are you pleased with your dwelling places?" To this they will all reply in chorus: "Yes, by Allāh! Our Lord has now caused us to dwell in the dwelling place of dignity and honor. We have no desire for any change of location, nor do we wish for any substitute instead of it. We are well pleased with our Lord as a neighbor! O Allāh, our Lord, we have listened to Your herald, and we have given him an honest reply. O Allāh, our Lord, we yearned to look upon Your countenance, and You showed it to us for that, as You surely knew, would be the most excellent part of our reward."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued:

At this point, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will give an order to the particular Garden of Paradise in which He has His dwelling *[manzil]* and His seat *[majlis]*. He will tell that Garden, the name of which is the Abode of Peace *[Dār as-Salām]*: "Gather up all your finery and make yourself really beautiful! Make yourself ready for the visit of My servants!" She will listen intently to her Lord, and will obey Him even before the word of command has been completely expressed. She will immediately gather up all her finery, and make herself ready to receive the visitors of Allāh (Exalted is He), whereupon Allāh (Exalted is He) will give the order to one of the angels: "Invite My servants to come and visit Me!"

That angel will promptly set forth from the presence of the All-Merciful One *[ar-Raḥmān]*, in order to proclaim this invitation at the top of his voice. In a deliciously sweet and drawn out voice, peculiar to himself alone, the angel will say: "O people of the Garden of Paradise! O saintly friends *[awliyā']* of Allāh! Come visit your Lord!"

The sound of the angel's voice will thus be heard by the loftiest and the lowliest of the inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise, so all of them will mount up on riding beasts, whether they be she-camels or plain old nags. Keeping to the shady side, they will ride toward hills of white musk and yellow saffron. Then, when they reach the entrance [to the Abode of Peace], they will utter a special form of salutation. In expressing this salutation *[taslīm]* of theirs, they will say: "Peace be upon us from our Lord *[as-salāmu ʿalai-nā min Rabbi-nā]*!" Then they will seek permission to enter, and permission will be granted to them, so they will move straight ahead and go in through the gate.

At this point, a wind will blow forth from beneath the Heavenly Throne, the name of it being The Whirlwind *[al-Muthīra]*. It will pulverize the hills of musk and saffron, filling the people's collars and sleeves with dust, and heaping dust on their heads and over their clothes. Thus they will enter [the Abode of Peace]. As they look toward the Throne *['Arsh]* of their Lord and His Footstool *[Kursī]*, they will see a bright light beaming at them, but without His making Himself clearly manifest to them, so they will say: "Glory be to You, our Lord Most Holy *[Subhāna-ka Rabba-nā Quddūs]*, Lord of the Angels and of the Spirit *[Rabb al-Malā'ikati wa 'r-Rūh]*. Blessed and Exalted are You *[tabārakta wa ta'ālait]*! Allow us to see, so that we may look upon Your countenance!"

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[365] See note 348 on p. 257 above.

[366] Kohl (from the Arabic word *kuḥl*) is a powder, usually a preparation of pulverized antimony, used for darkening the edges of the eyelids.

In response to this plea, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will give the order to the veils, which are made of light: "Remove yourselves!" Without interruption, one veil after another will thereupon withdraw itself, until seventy veils have withdrawn themselves—each veil being seventy times more intensely radiant than its predecessor—at which point the Lord of Might and Glory (Almighty and Majestic is He) will manifest Himself to them in perfect clarity. They will at once fall down in abject prostration before Him, to remain in that posture for as long as Allāh wills. While they are still prostrating themselves, they will say: "Glory be to You! To You be the praise and the glorification *[tasbīh]* for ever and ever! You have delivered us from the Fire of Hell, and You have caused us to enter the Garden of Paradise. Good indeed is the abode! We are utterly and completely content with You, so be well pleased with us!"

Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) will respond to this by saying: "I am indeed well pleased with you, to the fullest extent. But this is not the appropriate time for serious work. This is rather the time for refreshment and blissful happiness, so ask of Me and I shall grant your requests, and make your wishes known to Me, for then I shall give you even more."

Thus they will make their dearest wishes known, although they will do so without having to say a word. They will all have the same wish in common, namely that He should allow them to keep what He has given them on a permanent basis. He will therefore say to them (Exalted is He): "I shall indeed allow you to keep what I have given you on a permanent basis, and the same applies to all the extra blessings I have bestowed upon you!"

On hearing this promise from their Lord, they will raise their heads at once, as they utter the affirmation of the Supreme Greatness of Allāh *[at-takbīr]*.[367] They will be not be capable, however, of raising their eyes directly toward their Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), due to the extreme intensity of the Light of the Lord of Might and Glory *[Nūr Rabb al-'Izza]*. (By the way, that reception room *[majlis]* is called the East Wing of the Dome of the Throne of the Lord of All the Worlds *[Sharqī Qubbat 'Arsh Rabb al-'Ālamīn]*.) The Lord of Might and Glory will say to them: "Welcome, O My servants, My neighbors, My chosen ones, My dear ones, My saintly friends *[awliyā'ī]*, the best I have among all My creatures, and My obedient people!"

Pulpits of light will suddenly appear in front of the Throne of the Lord of Might and Glory; beneath those pulpits, chairs of light; beneath those chairs, cushions; beneath those cushions, padded quilts; and beneath those padded quilts, carpets.

[367] That is to say, they will exclaim: "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]"

The Lord of Might and Glory will then say to them: "Come, seat yourselves according to your honor and nobility." So the Messengers *[Rusul]* will come forward and seat themselves upon those pulpits, while the Prophets *[Anbiyā']* come forward and seat themselves upon those chairs, and the righteous *[sāliḥūn]* come forward and seat themselves upon those carpets. Tables of light will then be set up for their benefit, each table being adorned with seventy different colors, and crowned with an array of pearls and sapphires.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) went on to say:

The Lord of Might and Glory will then say to His helpers *[ḥafada]*: "Give them cooked food to eat!" Seventy thousand dishes, made from pearls and sapphires, will at once be set out for them on each and every table, with each and every dish containing seventy different kinds of cooked food.

The Lord of Might and Glory will then say to them: "Eat up, O My servants!" So they will eat as much of all that as Allāh wills. They will say to one another: "The food we are enjoying today is so special! The meals we used to eat, at home with our families, seem like nothing but a dream by comparison!"

The Lord of Might and Glory will then say to His helpers *[ḥafada]*: "Now give My servants something to quench their thirst!" Obedient to His command, the helpers will at once provide the servants of their Lord with a thirst-quenching beverage, and they will drink from it, saying to one another as they do so: "By comparison with the drink we can now enjoy, what we used to drink seems like nothing but a dream!"

The Lord of Might and Glory will then say to His helpers *[ḥafada]*: "You have supplied them with cooked food, and you have given them plenty to drink, so now you must provide them with fruit for their dessert!" Obedient to His command, the helpers will at once provide the servants of their Lord with fruit for their dessert. While eating it, they will say to one another: "By comparison with what we are now enjoying for dessert, the fruit we used to eat seems like nothing but a dream!"

The Lord of Might and Glory will then say to His helpers *[ḥafada]*: "You have supplied them with cooked food, you have given them plenty to drink, and you have provided them with fruit for their dessert, so now you must equip them with fine clothes and adornments." Obedient to His command, the helpers will at once produce fine clothes and adornments for the servants of their Lord to wear. As they are dressing themselves up in them, they will say to one another: "By comparison with all this finery, our previous clothing and adornments seem like nothing but a dream!"

Then, while they are still sitting in their seats, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will send forth, from beneath His Throne, a wind that is called The Whirlwind *[al-Muthīra]*. As it blows toward them with a cloud of musk and camphor—whiter than snow—from beneath the Throne, this wind will deposit a gentle dust upon their robes and their heads, as well as inside their collars and sleeves, fragrantly perfuming them in the process. The tables will then be removed from their presence, along with whatever is left of the food spread out upon them.

There is a saying to the effect that the act of repaying one *dānaq* [small coin][228] of silver is more meritorious in the sight of Allāh than six hundred pilgrimages, all of them blessed with acceptance *[ḥijja mabrūra]*. (According to another version: "than seventy pilgrimages, all of them worthy of acceptance.")

In the words of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "Tomorrow [in the life hereafter], those who sit at ease in the company of Allāh (Exalted is He) will be those who have practiced pious restraint and abstinence *[ahl al-waraʿ waʾz-zuhd]*."

It was Ibn al-Mubārak[229] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "To decline the unlawful offer of a single penny *[fals]*[230] is more meritorious in the sight of Allāh than donating one hundred pennies to charitable causes."

The following story is told about Ibn al-Mubārak: He once spent some time in Syria, for the purpose of making a written record of the traditions *[ḥadīth]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). While he was engaged in this activity, the pen he was using happened to break, so he borrowed another pen from one of the local residents. Then, when he had finished writing, he absentmindedly slipped the pen into his own pen case.

It was not till much later, by which time he had already returned to his home in Merv, that Ibn al-Mubārak set eyes on that pen again. He recognized it as the one he had borrowed, so he immediately set about making preparations for another long trip to Syria, for the sole purpose of giving the pen back to its owner.

According to traditional reports, an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr[231] (may

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[228] The *dānaq* was valued at one sixth of a dirham.

[229] Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ʿAbduʾllāh ibn al-Mubārak al-Ḥanẓalī al-Marwazī was born in A.H. 118/736 C.E. The son of a Turkish father and a Persian mother, he studied under many teachers in Merv and elsewhere, and became erudite in many branches of learning, including grammar and literature. Although he was a wealthy merchant, he was renowned for the ascetic quality of his personal lifestyle, and he distributed much of his wealth in alms to the poor. Of his many learned works on the traditions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the one that has survived is devoted to the theme of asceticism.

[230] The *fals* (pronounced *fils* in colloquial Arabic) is a small copper coin.

[231] Abū ʿAbdʾillāh an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr ibn Saʿd al-Khazrajī (d. A.H. 74). After having served as governor of Kūfa and Ḥims, under the Umayyad Caliph Yazīd, he joined the revolt of ʿAbdʾullāh ibn az-Zubair and was killed.

> kind of food. If this should happen, the morsel concerned would immediately change into whatever he really wanted to eat!

According to the same traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), somebody once asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, what makes up the ground of the Garden of Paradise?" To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Its ground is a kind of marble or alabaster slab *[rukhāma]* consisting of smooth silver, and its dust consists of musk. Its hills are of saffron, and its walls are made of pearls and sapphires, as well as of gold and silver. The outside of the walls can be seen from the area inside them, and their interior is likewise visible from their exterior. In the whole of the Garden of Paradise, there is not one palatial mansion of which the exterior is not visible from the interior, and the interior from the exterior.
>
> In the whole of the Garden of Paradise, furthermore, there will not be one man who is not dressed in a waist-wrapper *[izār]*, an upper-body shawl *[ridā']*, and other garments, not one of which has been cut, and not one of which has been sewn. Nor will there be one man among them who is not wearing a crown, hollowed out of a large pearl, and studded with with smaller pearls, sapphires, and chrysolite or peridot *[zabarjad]*[364] He will have two plaited strands *[dafīratān]* of gold in his hair, and around his neck he will wear a collar of gold, encased in pearls and green sapphires. On the wrist of each and every man amongst them there will be three bracelets: a bracelet of gold, a bracelet of silver, and a bracelet of pearl. Beneath their crowns there will be diadems of pearls and sapphires. Over those garments of theirs they will be wearing fine silk brocade *[sundus]*, and over that fine silk brocade there will also be thick silk brocade interwoven with gold *[istabraq]*, as well as plain green silk.
>
> As for the cushions on which the people of the Garden of Paradise will be reclining in the greatest comfort, their inner surfaces consist of thick silk brocade interwoven with gold *[istabraq]*, and their outer surfaces of beautiful multicolored carpeting *['abqarī]* The cushions are laid on raised couches, made of red sapphire, and these have pearls as their supports. Each and every one of those raised couches has a thousand decorative patterns, with seventy colors to each pattern, and no two patterns are alike. Seventy thousand rugs are spread out in front of each of those raised couches, with seventy colors to each rug, and not one of those rugs bears any resemblance to the one beside it. To the right of each of those raised couches there are seventy thousand pedestals, with an equal number to the left, and not one of those pedestals is similar to any other.

According to Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also used to say:

> The people of the Garden of Paradise in their entirety, the loftiest of them and the lowliest of them in spiritual rank, will be of the same physical height as Adam, and the physical height of Adam (peace be upon him) is sixty cubits

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[364] See note 81 on p. 61 above.

> and flavor as any other. If he feels a desire to sample one of those many varieties, the branch that carries the particular fruit he fancies will bend down toward him—from the distance of a journey taking five hundred years, or fifty years, or less than that—so that he may pick the fruit with his hand, if he wishes to do so. If it is not convenient for him to pick it with his hand, he has only to open his mouth, for the fruit will simply drop into his open mouth. As soon as any item is harvested from those fruit trees, Allāh will immediately create something even finer and tastier to take its place. Then, once the man has picked all the fruit he needs to satisfy his appetite, the bough will return to its previous position.
>
> There is one tree that does not bear fruit. It is laden instead with spathes or envelopes *[akmām]* containing unembroidered silk, articles of clothing, silk brocade *[sundus]*, ornaments, and fine carpets *['abqarī]*. There is also one tree amongst them that bears spathes containing musk and camphor.

According to Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also used to say:

> The people of the Garden of Paradise will behold their Lord every Friday [the Day of Congregational Prayer].
>
> If a diadem *[iklīl]* from the Garden of Paradise were ever to be sent down from heaven above, the light of the sun would disappear.
>
> There are certain palatial mansions in the Garden of Paradise, each of which has four streams inside it: water from a spring, milk from a spring, wine from a spring, and honey from a spring. If someone drinks any part of this, the taste it leaves behind will prove to be the flavor of musk *[sāra khitāmu-hu miskan]*.[171]
>
> They will not drink anything from it until it has been blended in a mixture from the fountains of the Garden of Paradise, one of which is known as *az-Zanjabīl* [Ginger],[172] another as *Tasnīm*,[173] and the other as *Kāfūr* [Camphor].[174] Those who are brought near [to the Lord] will drink a pure wine concocted from all of these.

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[171] An allusion to the verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān in which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us, with reference to a pure wine given to the righteous to drink in the Garden of Paradise:

Its end result shall be the taste of musk. (83:26)	*khitāmu-hu misk.*

[172] This statement attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) lends support to the view of those authorities who take *Zanjabīl* to be another name for *Salsabīl*, the fountain from which the wine of Paradise is drawn. As we read in the Qur'ān:

And therein they shall be given to drink	*wa yusqawna fī-hā*
a cup whose mixture is *zanjabīl*,	*ka'san kāna mizāju-hā zanjabīlā:*
a spring therein, named *Salsabīl* (76:17,18)	*'ainan fī-hā tusammā Salsabīlā*

Some commentators understand this to mean that the wine of the fountain will have the aromatic flavor of ginger. According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, *zanjabīl* [ginger, the root of the ginger plant] "has a property that is warming, digestive, lenitive in a small degree, strengthening to the venereal faculty, clearing to the phlegm, sharpening to the intellect, and exhilarating." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. Z–N–J–B–L.)

Were it not for the fact that Allāh has passed judgment amongst them, to the effect that they must hand the goblet around from one to another, they would never let it leave their mouths.

In the course to paying visits to one another, the people of the Garden of Paradise will cover the distance of a journey taking a hundred thousand years, and even more than that. Nevertheless, when they return from visiting their brethren, they will find their way home more directly than one of you could get back to his house.

When the people of the Garden of Paradise have seen their Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), and are ready to set out for home, every man amongst them will be given a green pomegranate *[rummāna]* containing seventy seeds. Each seed will have seventy colors, and no seed will be of quite the same sort as any other. Then, as they make their departure from the presence of their Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), they will pass through the markets of the Garden of Paradise. There will be no business of buying and selling in progress in those markets, but they will be well stocked with ornamental goods, articles of clothing, silk brocade *[sundus]*, thick silk brocade interwoven with gold *[istabraq]*, unembroidered silk, decorative items of gold and jewelry *[zukhruf]*, fine carpets *['abqarī]* woven from pearls and sapphires, and diadems suspended on display. They will therefore take from those markets as many of these varied goods as they can carry with them, and yet the markets will not have their stocks diminished by as much as a single item.

The markets of the Garden of Paradise will also contain dummy figures, similar in form to the most handsome human beings in existence. The forehead of each of these dummy figures will be marked with the inscription: "If anyone wishes to have the same good looks as mine, Allāh will cause that person to become just as handsome as my shape and form." If anyone responds to this by wishing that his own face could be just as good looking as that of the dummy figure, Allāh will promptly fulfill that person's wish.

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[373] This fountain is mentioned in the Qur'ān, in connection with the pure wine referred to in note 371 above:

And its mixture is from *Tasnīm*, a fountain	*wa mizāju-hu min Tasnīm:*
at which those brought near	*'ainan yashrabu*
[to the Lord] do drink (83:27,28)	*bi-ha 'l-muqarrabūn.*

As an ordinary verbal noun, the Arabic word *tasnīm* means "raising something into the shape of a camel's hump *[sanām]*." According to the classical lexicographers, the fountain is called *Tasnīm* because it flows above the elevated chambers and pavilions of Paradise. (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *S–N–M*.)

[374] The fountain called *Kāfūr* [Camphor] is also mentioned in the Qur'ān, where Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

Surely the pious shall drink	*inna 'l-abrāra yashrabūna*
of a cup whose mixture is camphor,	*min ka'sin kāna mizāju-hā*
a fountain at which	*kāfūrā: 'ainan*
the servants of Allāh do drink. (76:5,6)	*yashrabu bi-hā 'ibādu 'llāhi.*

As in the case of *Zanjabīl* [Ginger], referred to in note 372 above, the statement here attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) lends support to the view of those authorities who take *Kāfūr* [Camphor] to be the actual name of the fountain. According to some, however, notably including the distinguished commentator al-Baiḍāwī, the meaning of the Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* is that the wine of Paradise will be mixed with camphor *[kāfūr]* because of its agreeable coolness and aroma.

Then they will depart for their own dwelling places, and their servants will promptly line up in rows to meet them, standing to attention in order to bid them welcome and greet them with the salutation of peace. Each of them will engage in cheerful conversation with the companion who is traveling with him, until the good news of his arrival reaches his wife. She will then be so transported by joy that she will set out toward him. She will meet him at his door with a welcoming greeting and the salutation of peace. She will give him a hug and he will embrace her, and so they will go inside together, locked in a mutual embrace.

If any woman from among the womenfolk of the Garden of Paradise ever happened to come into view, no angel brought near [to the Lord] nor any Prophet sent as a Messenger *[Nabī Mursal]* who caught sight of her would fail to be enchanted by her beauty.

The last draught to be drunk by the people of the Garden of Paradise in the wake of their meal is a beverage called "pure and plentiful" *[tahūr dihāq]*. As soon as a draught of it has been drunk, their food and drink will be fully digested. It will cause the contents of their bellies to acquire a fragrance like that of musk. Their belching and burping will also have the scent of musk, and there will be no pain or discomfort in their bellies. When they drink, they will stimulate a healthy appetite for the meal, so this will always be their regular practice.

The riding animals of the people of the Garden of Paradise are created from white sapphire.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also used to say:

There are three Gardens of Paradise: [The one known simply as] the Garden *[al-Janna]*; [The Garden of] Eden *[ʿAdn]*, and The Abode of Peace *[Dār as-Salām]*. [The one known simply as] the Garden *[al-Janna]* is smaller than the Garden of Eden *[Jannat ʿAdn]* by a factor of seven hundred million.

As for the palatial mansions of the Garden, their exterior is of gold, while their interior consists of chrysolite or peridot *[zabarjad]*.[375] Their turrets are made from red rubies, and their balconies are constructed by an arrangement of strung pearls.

The man among the people of the Garden of Paradise will enjoy reclining next to his wife for a single session lasting seven hundred years, during the whole of which time he will never once move away from her side. Then his other wife will call out to him from a palatial mansion that is even more beautiful, saying: "O my brother [in faith], the time has now come for you to let us have our turn with you!" So the man will say: "Who are you?" and she will reply: "I am part of that [consolation] to which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) is referring when He says:

So no soul knows what comfort is kept secretly in store for them, as a reward for what they used to do. (32:17)	*fa-lā taʿlamu nafsun mā ukhfiya la-hum min qurrati aʿyun: jazāʾan bi-mā kānū yaʿmalūn.*

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[375] See note 81 on p. 61 above.

> He will therefore move over to join her, and he will continue to reside with her for a period of seven hundred years, eating and drinking in her company and having sexual intercourse with her throughout that time.
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> In the Garden of Paradise there is a tree, in the shade of which a rider can travel for seven hundred years without ever passing beyond it. Streams flow beneath that tree, and whole cities are built upon each of its many branches. The length of each of those cities is ten thousand miles, and the distance between each city and the next is like the distance between the East and the West. The springs of the Fountain of Paradise [*Salsabīl*] flow from those palatial mansions toward those cities. A single leaf from that tree is enough to provide shade for an enormously large community.
>
> When a man from among the people of the Garden of Paradise enters the presence of his wife, she will say: "By the One who has so generously honored me with you, I swear that nothing in the Garden of Paradise is more dear to me than you are!" Of course, the man will also tell his wife that he feels the same way about her.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also used to say:

> In the Garden of Paradise there are things that defy all efforts to describe them, of which no conception can be formed by the hearts of the learned, of which nothing can be heard by the ears of the attentive, and in it there are things that have never been seen by the eyes of created beings.
>
> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will cause those who love one another for His sake to alight in the Garden of Eden [*Jannat 'Adn*], where He will settle them upon a pillar made from a single red ruby, the thickness of which is equal to the distance of a journey taking seventy thousand years. From this vantage point, overlooking seventy thousand residential areas, each area having a palatial mansion, they will survey the inhabitants of the Garden. Marked in light upon their foreheads, they will bear an inscription that reads: "These are they who love one another for the sake of Allāh [*hā'ulā'i 'l-mutaḥābbūna fi 'llāh*]."
>
> If one of them happens to gaze from his palace toward the inhabitants of the Garden, the radiance of his face will fill the mansions of the inhabitants of the Garden with light, just as the sun illuminates the houses of the people of the earth. The inhabitants of the Garden will then look upon his face, and they will say to one another as they do so: "This must be one of those who love one another for the sake of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). See how his face is like the moon on the night when it is full!"
>
> The handsomeness of the true specimen of manhood [*rajul*], in contrast to the handsomeness of the manservant [*khādim*] among the people of the Garden of Paradise, is like [the brilliance of] the moon on the night when it is full, in contrast to [the fainter brilliance of] the stars.
>
> As for the womenfolk of the Garden of Paradise, they mark the end of their meal by singing in delightfully sweet and drawn-out voices: "We are the women who are everlasting, so we shall never die. We are the women who are safe and sound, so we shall never be afraid. We are the women who are satisfied, so we shall

never be discontented. We are the women who are forever young, so we shall never grow senile and decrepit. We are the women who are always clothed, so we shall never go naked. We are the women who are good, the women who are beautiful, the wives of a truly noble people."

As for the birds of the Garden of Paradise, each of them has seventy thousand feathers. Each of those feathers has a different color, quite unlike that of any other. The size of each bird amongst them is a mile in width by a mile in length. Whenever the true believer *[mu'min]* desires them to provide him with something to satisfy his appetite, he has only to fetch a bird and place it inside the bowl from which he intends to eat. The bird will then flap its wings and, as it rises, seventy kinds of food will fall from it into the bowl—such as cooked fare and all sorts of other tasty morsels. The flavor of this food is more delicious than honeydew, its tenderness is softer than butter, and its whiteness is whiter than buttermilk. As soon as he has eaten some of it, the bird will flap its wings again and fly away, without shedding a single feather in the process.

So that they can always enjoy this kind of service, their birds and their riding animals are carefully tended in the pastures of the Garden of Paradise surrounding their palatial mansions.

Allāh (Exalted is He) will give the people of the Garden of Paradise signet rings of gold for them to wear, these being the signet rings of eternal life. Then He will give them signet rings made of sapphire and pearls. That will be when they visit Him in the Abode of Peace *[Dār as-Salām]*.

When the people of the Garden of Paradise go to visit their Lord, they will eat and drink and thoroughly enjoy themselves.

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

The Lord of Might and Glory *[Rabb al-'Izza]* (Almighty and Majestic is He) will say: "O David, extol Me with your beautiful voice!" David will then extol Him for as long as Allāh (Exalted is He) wishes this celebration of His praise to continue, so that nothing in the Garden of Paradise will miss the opportunity to hear the beauty of his voice and its delightful sweetness. Then the Lord of Might and Glory (Almighty and Majestic is He) will present them with fine clothing and adornments. Then they will depart to rejoin their wives.

Every man among the people of the Garden of Paradise has access to the benefits provided by a tree called the Tree of Bliss *[Tūbā]*.[376] Whenever one of them wishes to dress himself up in clothes of extremely high quality, he has only to make his way to the Tree of Bliss *[Tūbā]*, the spathes or envelopes *[akmām]* of which will at once be opened up for him. These wardrobes are of six different kinds, each one of them containing seventy types of clothing. No article of clothing has the same color as any other, nor is any garment tailored from the same fabric as another. He may therefore take his pick, selecting whichever of these items he wishes to wear.

The following message is inscribed on the wives of the people of the Garden of Paradise—on the area between the throat and the breast of every woman amongst them: "You are my dearly beloved, and I am your dearly beloved *[anta*

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[376] See note 329 on p. 237 above.

Suddenly, while they are busily indulging in their sensual pleasures and enjoying their merry delight, the gateway of the King Most Holy *[al-Malik al-Quddūs]*—that is to say, the gateway of the Garden of Eden *[Jannat ‘Adn]*—will open unto them. The sound of the voices of spiritual beings *[rūḥāniyyīn]*, arrayed in ranks, will then issue forth from the Garden of Eden, vibrantly hymning the praises of the All-Generous and Nobly Exalted One *[tamājīd al-Mājid al-Karīm]* to all the ascending levels of the Gardens of Paradise *[darajāt al-Jinān]*. A wind of Eden will begin to blow, wafting forth all kinds of sweet perfume, spreading the breath of life, and fanning the gentle breeze *[nasīm]*—that is to say, the gentle breeze of nearness [to the Lord].

In the wake of this, a light will shine, and its radiance will shed a brilliant glow upon their charming meadows, their pavilions, and the banks of their rivers and streams. Every single thing that belongs to them will be filled with light. Then the Majestic One (Magnificent is His Majesty) *[al-Jalīl—jalla Jalālu-hu]* will call out to them from up above their heads:

"Peace be upon you *[as-salāmu ‘alaikum]*, My dear ones *[aḥibbā'ī]*, My saintly friends *[auliyā'ī]* and My chosen ones *[aṣfiyā'ī]*! O people of the Garden of Paradise, how did you find your recreational park *[muntazah]*? This is your special day, in lieu of the New Year's Day *[Nairūz]* of My enemies. They tried to find a special day in the world below, in order to freshen and renew for themselves the blissful happiness which they had spoiled for themselves on account of their wicked conduct and their wretched behavior. But they failed to obtain the pleasure they were seeking.

"They incurred nothing but loss, instead of what they sought to acquire immediately, in the temporal realm *[fi 'l-‘ājil]*, and they were too impatient to wait until they could obtain all this, which I had prepared in the realm of the future *[fi 'l-ājil]*, for the benefit of those who were faithfully committed to obeying Me. You turned your backs on all that they found so intensely interesting, and you refused to get involved in matters that stir up rivalry and mutual competition among people addicted to the lower world. Ah well, today they are tasting the evil consequences of that which spurred them to compete with one another in such pointless rivalry.

- That Allāh (Exalted is He) is not set apart in opposition to His creatures.
- That the scope of Allāh's effective power is not unlimited, so the people of the Garden of Paradise may be stranded forever in a state of immobility, while Allāh (Exalted is He) is unable to set them in motion, and since they are incapable of making themselves move. It is possible, however, for actions to be performed by the dead, the disabled and the decrepit.
- Abū Hudhail rejected the idea that Allāh (Exalted is He) has always been All-Hearing *[Samī']*.

2. As for the Naẓẓāmiyya, their Shaikh an-Naẓẓām used to teach that inanimate bodies *[jamādāt]* are activated by the forces of nature. He used to deny the existence of accidents *[a'rāḍ]*, with the exception of dependent motion *[ḥaraka i'timādiyya]*.

He maintained that the real human being is the spirit *[al-insān huwa'r-rūḥ]*, and that no one has seen the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), since all that anyone ever saw was his envelope *[ẓarf]*, meaning his physical body.

He made a radical break with the general consensus *[ijmā']*, when he declared that if a person deliberately refrains from performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, even though he is reminded of it, he is not required to make it up later. He actually refused to recognize the infallibility of the general consensus of the Muslim community *[umma]*,[96] and allowed for the possibility that its members might agree to accept an untruth *[bāṭil]*.

He also maintained that faith *[īmān]* is the same thing as unbelief *[kufr]*, and that worshipful obedience *[ṭā'a]* is the same thing as sinful disobedience *[ma'ṣiya]*. He held that the conduct of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was no different from the conduct of Iblīs the accursed, and that the behavior of 'Umar and 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with them both) was no different from the behavior of al-Ḥajjāj.[97] His emphasis on this theme, and his insistence on pursuing it, is less inexplicable than it may seem at first sight, because he often used to say: "All animate creatures are one single species *[al-ḥayawān kulluhu jins wāḥid]*."

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[96] In a well-known and frequently quoted tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) declared:

> My Community *[Ummatī]* will never agree on an error.

[97] The behavior of al-Ḥajjāj, as an early governor of 'Irāq, was in fact notoriously harsh and brutal.

And when you see, there you will see	*wa idhā ra'aita thamma*
a state of bliss and a high estate.	*ra'aita na'īman wa mulkan kabīrā.*
Their raiment will be	*'āliya-hum thiyābu*
fine green silk	*sundusin khuḍrun*
and gold brocade. They will be	*wa istabraq: wa ḥullū asāwira*
adorned with bracelets of silver.	*min fiḍḍa: wa saqā-hum*
their Lord will slake	*Rabbu-hum*
their thirst with a pure drink.	*sharāban ṭahūrā.*
[And it will be said unto them]:	
"Behold, this is a reward for you.	*inna hādhā kāna la-kum jazā'an*
Your endeavor [upon earth]	*wa kāna sa'yu-kum*
has found acceptance." (76:11–22)	*mashkūrā.*

As for His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Allāh has therefore warded off	*fa-waqā-humu 'llāhu*
from them the evil of that day…	*sharra dhālika 'l-yaumi…*
(76:11)	

—what He means is that, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, He will spare them from having to experience the awful intensity of the Reckoning *[Ḥisāb]* and the dread terror of Hell *[Jahannam]*.

[As we know from traditional accounts, attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him):][378]

When Hell is brought forth upon the parade grounds of the Resurrection *['arasāt al-Qiyāma]*, it will be led there by nineteen keepers from among the angels. Each and every one of those keepers will be accompanied by seventy thousand other angels, serving as his assistants, all of them rough, stern, their teeth grimly gritted, their eyes like live coals, and their colors like the flames of fire. While their nostrils give vent to lofty columns of flame and smoke, they stand at the ready, prepared at all times to receive and carry out the command of the All-Compelling One *[al-Jabbār]* (Blessed and Exalted is He).

Each keeper and his assistants will thus drag Hell along by means of a shackle and an enormous chain, sometimes walking to the right of it, sometimes to the left of it, and sometimes following up behind it. Each and every angel amongst them will hold in his hand a grappling hook made of iron. They will shout and bellow as they goad Hell along, but its slow progress will be made to the accompaniment of moaning and sighing, staggering and stumbling, clouds of gloom and smoke, rattling and clanking noises, and a towering inferno stoked by the fury of its rage against its own inhabitants. Thus they will eventually install it in a position midway between the Garden of Paradise and the place where the resurrected creatures are kept standing *[al-mawqif]*.

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[378] See pp. 248–68 above.

At this point, Hell will lift its gaze. As soon as it spies the creatures assembled there, it will bolt toward them in order to devour them. Its keepers will have to pull on its chains to hold it in check, for if it were left to its own devices, it would pounce upon every believer *[muʾmin]* and unbeliever *[kāfir]* without distinction. Once it sees that it has been effectively restrained from attacking the assembled throng of creatures, it will simmer and boil with an intensity that can hardly be distinguished from the most furious kind of rage. Then it will heave another sigh, and the resurrected creatures will hear the sound of the gnashing of its teeth. This will cause their hearts to shudder and tremble with alarm. They will fly into a state of panic, their eyes will glaze over, and their hearts will end up in their throats.

Then Hell will heave a deep sigh, which will so affect those who hear it that not a single one of them will fail to sink down on his knees—not one angel brought near to the Lord *[malʾak muqarrab]*, not one Prophet sent as a Messenger *[Nabī Mursal]*, and not one of those resurrected creatures who are present at the place of standing *[al-mawqif]*.

Then Hell will heave a second deep sigh, and not a single eye that still has a drop of moisture in it will fail to shed a tear.

Then Hell will heave a third deep sigh, and even if those who hear that sigh—be they human beings or jinn—were each endowed with the merit of seventy-two Prophets, they would surely suppose that they must be embracing her as a man embraces a woman *[la-ẓannū anna-hum muwāqiʿū-hā]*,[379] and that they could not possibly escape from her embrace.[380]

Then Hell will heave a fourth deep sigh, and nothing that is capable of speech will fail to have its speech arrested. The only exceptions will be Gabriel, Michael, and [Abraham] the Bosom Friend *[Khalīl]* of the All-Merciful One *[ar-Raḥmān]* (Almighty and Glorious is He), each one of whom will say, as they cling to the Heavenly Throne *[ʿArsh]*: "My own soul, my own soul *[nafsī, nafsī]*—that is all I beg You to spare!"

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[379] In a previous subsection of this Discourse, where this account of Hell's appearance at the Resurrection is attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the wording is slightly different at this point. In the passage translated on page 250 above, the Arabic text reads *la-wāqaʿū-hā* [they would surely be moved to embrace her as a man embraces a woman], instead of *la-ẓannū anna-hum muwāqiʿū-hā* [they would surely suppose that they must be embracing her as a man embraces a woman]. The additional phrase at the end of the paragraph—about the impossibility of escape—occurs only in this second version of the report.

[380] See note 344 on p. 250 above.

Then Hell will send forth a shower of sparks, as numerous as the stars. Each spark will be like an enormous cloud arising in the West, and that shower of sparks will fall upon the heads of the assembled creatures.

This, then, is the shower of sparks *[sharar]* which Allāh will ward off from the true believers *[mu'minīn]* who faithfully discharge their solemn vow, and who are in dread of His chastisement, fearing that it might be inflicted upon them. For Allāh (Exalted is He) will surely protect all those who are committed to the affirmation of His Oneness and to faith *[ahl at-tawḥīd wa 'l-īmān]*—as He will protect all those who remain faithful to the example set by His Messenger *[ahl as-Sunna]*—from the evil *[sharr]* of that day.[381] He will cause them to experience His mercy. He will make their final reckoning easy for them to undergo. He will cause them to enter His Garden of Paradise, and He will grant them everlasting life therein, for all eternity, through His loving grace.

As for the unbelievers *[kāfirīn]*, on the other hand, and those who are guilty of attributing partners to Him and of worshipping idols *[ahl ash-shirk wa 'l-awthān]*, He will cause them to suffer evil upon evil, fear upon fear, and torment upon torment. For He will cause them to enter Hell *[Jahannam]*, and He will make them live therein forever, for all eternity.

Then He has told us (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And He has made them find	*wa laqqā-hum*
cheerfulness and joy. (76:11)	*naḍratan wa surūrā.*

Cheerfulness *[naḍra]* shows in people's faces,[382] while joy *[surūr]* is felt

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[381] For a full understanding of the commentary devoted by the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) to the Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*:

Allāh has therefore warded off from them	*fa-waqā-humu 'llāhu*
the evil of that day. (76:11)	*sharra dhālika 'l-yaumi.*

—it is important to be aware that the Arabic word *sharar* [(a shower of) sparks] is derived from the same triconsonantal root—*sh-r-r*—as the word *sharr* [evil].

[382] The word *naḍra* [cheerfulness, cheerful radiance] also occurs in one other verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān, where the context clearly confirms this comment by the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

You will recognize in their faces	*taʿrifu fī wujūhi-him*
the cheerful radiance of bliss. (83:24)	*naḍrata 'n-naʿīm.*

In its fullest sense, according to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the expression *naḍrata 'n-naʿīm* signifies: "the beauty and brightness of aspect characteristic of blissful enjoyment" or "of a plentiful and pleasant and easy state of existence"—or "the brightness, or glistening, and moisture upon the skin that is characteristic thereof." (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *N-Ḍ-R*.)

within their hearts.[383] What is alluded to here is the following experience:

As soon as the true believer *[mu'min]* has emerged from his grave or tomb on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, he will look straight ahead of himself. There, lo and behold, he will see a human being whose face is like the sun, and who is laughing merrily. This person will be dressed in white robes, and on his head there will be a crown.

The newly resurrected believer will gaze at the unusual individual, until the latter draws near to him and says: "Peace be upon you, O saintly friend of Allāh *[salāmun 'alaik, yā waliyya 'llāh]*!" He will respond to this greeting by saying: "And upon you be peace *[wa 'alaika 's-salām]*! Who are you, O servant of Allāh? Are you one of the angels *[mal'ak mina 'l-malā'ika]*?" To this the other will reply: "No, by Allāh!" The following questions and answers will then be exchanged between the pair:

"Are you one of the Prophets *[nabī mina 'l-anbiyā']*?"

"No, by Allāh!"

"Are you one of those drawn near [to the Lord] *[mina 'l-muqarrabīn]*?"

"No, by Allāh!"

"Well then, who are you?"

"I am your own righteous conduct *['amal sāliḥ]*. I have come to greet you with the good news of your admission to the Garden of Paradise and salvation from the Fire of Hell."

"O servant of Allāh, do you really know that for a fact, so that you can confidently give me such glad tidings?

"Yes!"

Once this assurance has been given, the conversation will continue as follows:

"Well then, what do you want from me?"

"Climb up on my shoulders and use me as your means of transport."

"Glory be to Allāh *[Subhāna 'llāh]*! It cannot be right and proper for the likes of you to be ridden as a means of transport!

"Oh yes, it is entirely appropriate, considering how long I rode about on your shoulders in the realm of the lower world. So now I am begging you, for the sake of Allāh's countenance, to mount up and ride upon me."

The newly resurrected believer will thereupon agree to mount and ride upon the embodiment of his own righteous conduct, at which point

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[383] It is significant to note that the word *surur* [joy, happiness, gladness] is derived from the same triconsonantal root—*s-r-r*—as the term *sirr* [secret; the hidden recesses of the innermost being].

And when you see, there you will see	*wa idhā ra'aita thamma*
a state of bliss and a high estate.	*ra'aita na'īman wa mulkan kabīrā.*
Their raiment will be	*'āliya-hum thiyābu*
fine green silk	*sundusin khuḍrun*
and gold brocade. They will be	*wa istabraq: wa ḥullū asāwira*
adorned with bracelets of silver,	*min fiḍḍa: wa saqā-hum*
their Lord will slake	*Rabbu-andhum*
their thirst with a pure drink.	*sharāban ṭahūrā.*
[And it will be said unto them]:	
"Behold, this is a reward for you.	*inna hādhā kāna la-kum jazā'an*
Your endeavor [upon earth]	*wa kāna sa'yu-kum*
has found acceptance." (76:11–22)	*mashkūrā.*

As for His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Allāh has therefore warded off	*fa-waqā-humu 'llāhu*
from them the evil of that day… (76:11)	*sharra dhālika 'l-yaumi…*

—what He means is that, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, He will spare them from having to experience the awful intensity of the Reckoning *[Ḥisāb]* and the dread terror of Hell *[Jahannam]*.

[As we know from traditional accounts, attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him):][378]

When Hell is brought forth upon the parade grounds of the Resurrection *['arasāt al-Qiyāma]*, it will be led there by nineteen keepers from among the angels. Each and every one of those keepers will be accompanied by seventy thousand other angels, serving as his assistants, all of them rough, stern, their teeth grimly gritted, their eyes like live coals, and their colors like the flames of fire. While their nostrils give vent to lofty columns of flame and smoke, they stand at the ready, prepared at all times to receive and carry out the command of the All-Compelling One *[al-Jabbār]* (Blessed and Exalted is He).

Each keeper and his assistants will thus drag Hell along by means of a shackle and an enormous chain, sometimes walking to the right of it, sometimes to the left of it, and sometimes following up behind it. Each and every angel amongst them will hold in his hand a grappling hook made of iron. They will shout and bellow as they goad Hell along, but its slow progress will be made to the accompaniment of moaning and sighing, staggering and stumbling, clouds of gloom and smoke, rattling

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[378] See pp. 248–68 above.

are the loads they have to bear! (6:31)	*a-lā sā'a mā yazirūn.*

Then Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has made mention of His saintly friends *[awliyā']*, for He has told us:

And He has granted them, as a reward (76:12)	*wa jazā-hum*

That is to say, in addition to the good tidings [of cheerfulness and joy].

for all that they have endured, (76:12)	*bi-mā ṣabarū*

That is to say, for their patient endurance in the face of trials and tribulations, in the performance of commandments and the avoidance of prohibitions, and in submissive acceptance of the decree of destiny *[qadar]*.

a Garden [of Paradise] and silk [attire]. (76:12)	*jannatan* *wa ḥarīrā.*

As far as the Garden of Paradise is concerned, they will lead a life of ease and comfort therein. As for the silk, they will use it as the material for the clothes they wear.

Next, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

[They will be] reclining therein... (76:13)	*muttaki'īna fī-hā*

That is to say, in the Garden of Paradise.

upon [raised and canopied] couches. (76:13)	*'ala 'l-arā'ik.*

That is to say, upon raised couches *[surur]* with canopies *[hijāl]*, i.e., curtains *[sutur]*, draped over them.[384]

They will experience there neither a sun nor bitter cold. (76:13)	*lā yarauna fī-hā* *shamsan wa lā zamharīrā.*

That is to say, they will not be afflicted by the heat of the sun, nor by the bitter cold of severe frost, because there is neither winter nor summer in the Garden of Paradise.

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[384] According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the term *arīka* (of which *arā'ik* is the plural form) denotes: "a raised couch *[sarīr]* in a *hajala*, which is a tent, or pavilion, or chamber, adorned with cloths or curtains." According to one authority, the *arīka* is so named because it was originally made of the wood of the thorny trees termed *arāk*, from which the sticks traditionally used for cleaning the teeth are also made. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *'–R–K.*)

Then Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

And close upon them is the shade thereof, while its clustered fruits bow down low. (76:14)	*wa dāniyatan 'alai-him* *ẓilālu-hā: wa dhullilat* *quṭūfu-hā tadhlīlā.*

That is to say, the shade of the trees [is close upon them]. What is alluded to here is the following state of affairs:

The inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise may eat of its fruits while they are standing up, if they so wish, or while they are sitting down, if they so wish, or even, if they so wish, while they are sleeping. Whenever they want to enjoy some fruit, the clusters will bow down close enough to them for one of them to stand up and take his pick. Such is the explanation of His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

while its clustered fruits bow down low. (76:14)	*wa dhullilat quṭūfu-hā* *tadhlīlā.*

Then He has told us (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And flasks of silver are brought around for them, and vessels. (76:15)	*wa yuṭāfu 'alai-him bi-āniyatin min* *fiḍḍatin wa akwābin.*

These vessels *[akwāb]* are actually mugs or tankards *[kīzān]*, except that they have round tops[385] and are not equipped with handles. He has also said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

[Those vessels] are crystal beakers, crystal beakers made of silver. (76:15–16)	*kānat qawārīrā* *qawārīran min fiḍḍatin.*

In other words, the vessels concerned are of the type called *qawārīr* [beakers normally made of crystal, in the sense of clear, colorless glass of the highest quality], but in this case they are made of silver. The explanation of the seeming paradox is simply this: Whereas the *qawārīr* of this lower world are made of earthly material, the *qawārīr* of the Garden of Paradise are made of silver.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has then added these words to His description of the vessels:

They have measured them in exact proportion. (76:16)	*qaddarū-hā* *taqdīrā.*

That is to say, the vessels *[akwāb]* have been measured to match the proportions of the flask *[inā']*, and the flask has been measured to fit the palm of the servant in charge of dispensing the people's drink. This has been done to ensure that exactly the right amount is always poured. Not a drop will be left in the flask, and not a drop too much will be poured, since all the elements involved have been measured to correspond exactly. Such is the import of His words (Exalted is He):

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[385] The roundness of their tops is referred to as a way of indicating that these vessels *[akwāb]* have no spouts. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *K–W–B* and art. *K–W–Z*.)

They have measured them	*qaddarū-hā*
in exact proportion. (76:16)	*taqdīrā.*

He has also told us (Exalted is He):

And in it their thirst is quenched	*wa yusqawna*
with a cup. (76:17)	*fī-hā ka'san.*

That is to say, their thirst is quenched with a [cup of] wine *[khamr]*, since no receptacle that does not contain wine can be called a [wine] cup *[ka's]*![186]

He has also told us (Exalted is He):

The mixture of it is ginger. (76:17)	*kāna mizāju-hā zanjabīlā.*

That is to say, the whole of it has had ginger *[zanjabīl]* mixed in with it.

Then Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has spoken of:

A fountain therein, named *Salsabīl*.	*'ainan fī-hā tusammā Salsabīlā.*
(76:18)	

This fountain flows toward them from the Garden of Eden *[Jannat 'Adn]*,[187] for it passes through every Garden, then returns to its source. It touches every part of the Garden of Paradise.

He has also told us (Exalted is He):

And waiting on them are	*wa yaṭūfu 'alai-him*
immortal youths. (76:19)	*wildānun mukhalladūn.*

These youths are the attendants *[ghilmān]* who will never become white-haired with age. Since they have been granted immortal youth, they will never attain the age of puberty, let alone grow old. Speaking of these ever-youthful attendants, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

If you could see them,	*idhā ra'aita-hum*
you would take for scattered	*ḥasibta-hum lu'lu'an manthūrā.*
pearls. (76:19)	

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[186] According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the term *ka's*, which usually means "a drinking-cup; a cup containing wine; a cup full of wine," may sometimes signify "wine" itself. When a cup does not contain wine, however, it is called *qadaḥ* instead of *ka's*. (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *K–'–S*.)

[187] That is to say, according to the Arabic lexicographers, "the Garden of Perpetual Abode." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *'–D–N*.)

That is to say, they would seem like pearls on account of their handsome appearance and the whiteness of their complexion, and like scattered pearls on account of their great number. In other words, they would seem like scattered pearls too numerous for anyone to count them all.

Then Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

And when you see, there... (76:20)	*wa idhā ra'aita thamma...*

That is to say, over there in the Garden of Paradise.

You will see a state of bliss and a vast estate. (76:20)	*ra'aita na'īman* *wa mulkan kabīrā.*

What this signifies in detail is as follows: Any man, who is numbered among the inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise, will be the owner of a palace. Within that palace there will be seventy palatial mansions. Inside every mansion there will be seventy apartments. Every apartment will be constructed from a hollowed pearl, the height of which extends skyward to the distance of a league *[farsakh]*,[308] while its width and length are a league by a league. It will be equipped with four thousand door panels made of gold.

Inside that apartment there will be a thronelike raised couch *[sarīr]*, embroidered with threads of pearl and sapphire on the right side and the left, respectively. There will also be four thousand footstools made of gold, with supporting legs of red ruby. That thronelike raised couch will have seventy cushions spread upon its surface, every cushion of a different color. The owner will be reclining there on his left side, clad in seventy articles of clothing tailored from silk brocade. The garment closest to his body will be made of white silk, and on his forehead he will wear a diadem *[iklīl]*, embedded with chrysolite or peridot *[zabarjad]*,[309] sapphires, and various kinds of jewels, every jewel being of a different color. Upon his head he will wear a crown of gold, with seventy corners to it, and on every corner a pearl as wide as the entire distance between the East and the West. On his wrist he will carry three bracelets: a bracelet of gold, a bracelet of silver, and a bracelet of pearl. On his fingers and toes he will be wearing rings of gold and silver, studded with various kinds of precious stones.

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[308] See note 68 on p. 48 above.

[309] See note 81 on p. 61 above.

On duty in his presence there will be ten thousand ever-youthful attendants, who will never reach adulthood, let alone become white-haired with age.

A table made from a single red ruby will also be set in front of him, the size of its top being a mile in width by a mile in length. Laid out upon that table will be seventy thousand kitchen utensils made of gold and silver, and in each of those bowls and dishes there will be no fewer than seventy different kinds of food. Then, as soon as he has picked out some tasty morsel with his hand, it may occur to him that he would actually prefer another, in which case the taste and texture of the morsel concerned will immediately be transformed, so that it turns into the one he really fancies.

Youthful attendants *[ghilmān]* will be ready to wait upon him at table, holding drinking vessels of silver in their hands, as well as flasks of silver from which to pour his drink. They will have both wine and water with them. He will thus be able to eat as much of all the various dishes as forty men could ordinarily consume, for as soon as he has had his fill of a particular kind of food, they will give him a draught of whichever drink he happens to prefer, and he will then relieve his indigestion by burping and belching.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will grant him access to a thousand different ways of experiencing an appetite.[190] The man will go on drinking till he breaks out in a sweat, then, once he has started to perspire, Allāh will make him aware of the existence of a thousand separate entrances to the appetite for food and drink. Through those entrances, birds resembling enormous thoroughbred she-camels will fly into his presence, alighting to form a row in front of him. Each bird will then proceed to offer a description of itself, in a charmingly melodious voice, more delightful by far than any singing to be heard in this lower world. It will say: "O saintly friend of Allāh *[yā waliyya 'llāh]*, eat me up, for I have been raised and cared for in such and such an aviary in the pastures of the Garden of Paradise, and I am accustomed to drinking from such and such a fountain." The birds will go on appealing to him in those beautiful voices of theirs, until he eventually looks up and fixes his gaze on one bird in particular—the one with the most compelling voice, as well as the most attractive self-description—and feels the desire to make a meal of it. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) is well aware, of course, of the liking for it that has now become lodged in the heart of His servant. That bird will therefore come at once and alight upon the table—part of it cut into strips, salted and dried [*qadīd*], part of it broiled, grilled or roasted [*shawī*], and all of it whiter than snow and sweeter than honey. The man will then proceed to eat until he has had his fill of it, until his appetite has been fully satisfied. At this point the bird will become a bird again, just as it was before, and it will fly out through the very door by which it entered.

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[190] Literally, "Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will open up *[yaftaḥu]* for him a thousand doors or gates of appetite." The verb *yaftaḥu* is derived from the triliteral root *f–t–ḥ*, which conveys the basic idea of "openness". For a full account of many important ramifications of this Arabic root, see the Translator's Introduction to *The Sublime Revelation [al-Fatḥ ar-Rabbānī]*, another volume in the Al-Baz series of English translations of the works of Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

As for the man, he will be reclining all the while "upon raised and canopied couches [*'ala 'l-arā'iki*],"[391] and his wife will be right there beside him, turning her face toward his. He will see his own face reflected in hers, on account of the pure clarity and whiteness of her complexion. Whenever he wishes to have sexual intercourse with her, he will give her a longing look, yet he will feel too shy to invite her in explicit terms. She will be well aware, however, of what her husband wants from her, so she will make him a frank proposal, saying: "By my father and my mother, I urge you to raise your head and look at me directly, for you belong to me this day, and I belong to you!" He will respond to this by making love to her with all the strength and vigor of a hundred ancient heroes [*mi'a rajul min al-awwalīn*], and with all the passionate desire of forty stalwart men. When he approaches her sexually, he will discover that she is a virgin. He will not let his attention stray from her for one moment, during a period of forty days. Then, when he finally reaches the point of exhaustion, he will notice that the aroma of musk is emanating from her, and this will serve to increase still further the love he feels for her as a wife. As an inhabitant of the Garden of Paradise, he will have four thousand and eighty wives like her, and each wife will have seventy menservants and maidservants.

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[391] An allusion to the verse [*āya*] of the Qur'ān (76:13) discussed by the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) on p. 294 above. (See also note 384 above).

From another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a maidservant or a manservant [belonging to the inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise] were ever to emerge into this lower world, all the people of this world would surely engage in mortal combat over her or him, until they were all extinct. And if the maidens of Paradise, with eyes so fair *[al-ḥūr al-ʿīn]*,[392] were ever to let their locks of hair trail down upon the earth, the light of the sun would be extinguished, because of their vastly brighter radiance.

Someone once asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, how great is the contrast [in the Garden of Paradise] between the manservant *[khādim]*, on the one hand, and the man who is served as a master *[makhdūm]*, on the other?" To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> By the One in whose Hand my soul is held, the distinction [in the Garden of Paradise] between the manservant *[khādim]*, on the one hand, and the man who is served as a master *[makhdūm]*, on the other, is like the stars that are almost too faint to be visible, in contrast to the moon at the halfway point [i.e., in the middle of the month, when it is at the full].[393]

Let us now resume our description of the state of bliss enjoyed by that inhabitant of the Garden of Paradise:

While he is sitting there upon his thronelike couch *[sarīr]*, lo and behold, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will send him an angel, bearing seventy fine articles of clothing, each of a different kind. These gifts will be tucked out of sight between the two fingers of the angel, who will also be conveying the salutation of peace and contentment. On reaching the door of the man's abode, the angel will come to a halt, saying to the doorkeeper: "Permit me to enter the presence of Allāh's saintly friend *[walī]*, for I come to him as the Messenger of the Lord of All the Worlds." The doorkeeper will say in response: "By Allāh, I do not possess the authority to converse with him directly. Nevertheless, I shall mention you to my immediate superiors among the doorkeeping staff." They will then refer the matter from one to another in turn, until the information finally reaches him, after passing through seventy doors. The last in the chain of doorkeepers will tell him: "O saintly friend of Allāh *[yā waliyya 'llāh]*, the Messenger of the Lord of All the Worlds is waiting at the outside door." He will then grant permission for the messenger to enter into his presence, so the angel will come inside and say: "Peace be upon you, O saintly friend of Allāh *[as-salāmu 'alaik, yā waliyya 'llāh]*! The Lord of Might and Glory (Almighty and Majestic is He) extends to you the greeting of peace, and He is well-pleased with you." On hearing this news, but for the fact that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has not condemned him to death, the man would die of sheer happiness.

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[392] See note 333 on p. 241 above.

[393] From the general context of this passage, it seems safe to assume that the contrast referred to here—first by the anonymous questioner and then by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)—is one that exists in the Garden of Paradise, although this is not explicitly stated in either case. To confirm the assumption, we may adduce the rather similar traditional report (cited on p. 285 above) from which we learn, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also used to say:

> The handsomeness of the true specimen of manhood *[rajul]*, in contrast to the handsomeness of the manservant *[khādim]* among the people of the Garden of Paradise, is like [the brilliance of] the moon on the night when it is full, in contrast to [the fainter brilliance of] the stars.

Such is the import of His words (Exalted is He):

And greater yet [is the promise of] good pleasure from Allāh; that is the mighty triumph. (9:72)	*wa riḍwānun* *mina 'llāhi akbar:* *dhālika huwa 'l-fawzu 'l-'aẓīm.*

Such is likewise the import of His words (Exalted is He):

And when you see. (76:21)	*wa idhā ra'aita.*

By this He means: "And when you, O Muhammad, see."

There you will see a state of bliss… (76:21)	*thamma ra'aita na'īman…*

That is to say, over there you will see the state of bliss in which he finds himself.

and a high estate. (76:21)	*wa mulkan kabīrā.*

He must be endowed with a high estate indeed, when the Messenger of Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds, may not enter his presence without permission!

Then Allāh (Glorious and Exalted is He) has told us:

Upon them will be green garments of fine silk and thick brocade. (76:21)	*'āliya-hum thiyābu* *sundusin khuḍrun wa istabraq.*

That is to say, their outer garments will consist of silk brocade *[dībāj]*.[194] By using the expression "upon them *['āliya-hum]*," He has simply allowed for the unstated but obvious fact that the undergarment, the one right next to the person's skin, will consist of plain white silk.[395]

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[194] According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the term *istabraq* is properly applied to thick *dībāj* [silk brocade], or, more precisely, to "closely woven, thick, beautiful *dībāj* [silk brocade] interwoven with gold." (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *B–R–Q* and art. *D–B–J*.)

Then He has told us (Exalted is He):

They will also be adorned with bracelets of silver. (76:21)	*wa ḥullū* *asāwira min fiḍḍa.*

In another verse *[āya]*, from a different chapter *[sūra]* of the Qur'an, we also read:

They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and of pearls. (22:23)	*yuḥallawna fī-hā min asāwira* *min dhahabin wa lu'lu'ā.*

This means that there must be three types of bracelets altogether.

Then Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

And their Lord will slake their thirst with a pure drink. (76:21)	*wa saqā-hum Rabbu-hum* *sharāban ṭahūrā.*

In order to grasp the full significance of these words, one needs to be aware of the following scenario:

At the entrance to the Garden of Paradise there stands a tree, from whose trunk two fountains gush forth. So, whenever a man succeeds in crossing the Bridge over Hell *[aṣ-Ṣirāt]*, and in reaching these two fountains, he will plunge into one of the springs in order to bathe himself therein. He will thus acquire an aroma that is even more delightful than musk. His physical height will now be seventy cubits *[dhirā']*,[396] matching the stature of Adam (peace be upon him).[397]

All the people of the Garden of Paradise, the men and the women alike, will be of exactly the same age on the birthday of Jesus (peace be upon him), when each and every one of them will become a permanent thirty-three-year-old person. The young boy will grow older in a hurry, until he becomes a thirty-three-year-old adult, while the gray-haired elder will quickly shed his aged condition and revert to the age of thirty-three. All of them, the men and the women alike, will be endowed with the same good looks as Joseph, the son of Jacob (peace be upon them both).

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[395] In the context of the English translation alone, the expression "upon them" would hardly call for an explanation. In the original Arabic, however, the expression *'āliya-hum*, as a quite uncommon synonym for the familiar *'alai-him*, does seem to suggest a nuance in need of interpretation.

[396] See note 348 on p. 257 above.

[397] According to one traditional report, cited earlier in this Discourse (p. 276 above), the physical height of Adam (peace be upon him) was sixty cubits, rather than seventy.

As well as bathing himself in one of the two fountains, the man will drink from the other, thereby expelling all unworthy feelings from inside his breast, whether they be spite and malice, anxiety and worry, jealousy and envy, or grief and sorrow. For, by means of that water, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will bring his heart into the open. He will thus emerge with his heart in the same condition as the heart of Job *[Ayyūb]*, and with his tongue transformed into one that can speak the Arabic language as fluently as the tongue of Muḥammad (may Allāh bless them both, and may He grant them peace).

The man and his companions will then press on beyond the two fountains, until they come to the gateway itself, at which point the guardians of the Garden of Paradise will say to them: "Have you been through the process of purification?" They will all say yes, so the guardians will say: "Enter, to dwell herein forever!" By greeting them with the good news of eternal residence, before the actual moment of entry *[bi 'l-khulūd qabla 'd-dukhūl]*, they intend to assure them that they will never have to leave.

As soon as someone goes in through the entrance to the Garden of Paradise, he will be accompanied by the two angels who were always with him in the realm of the lower world, these being none other than the Noble Recorders *[al-Kirām al-Kātibīn]*.[198] At that very same moment, lo and behold, he will notice the presence of another angel, this one accompanied by a thoroughbred she-camel, created from a single green corundum *[yāqūta khaḍrā']*. Its bridle and reins appear to be made from a red ruby *[yāqūta ḥamrā']*. As for the saddle on its back, the front and rear portions both consist of pearls and sapphires, while its main surface is of gold and silver. This angel will also bring with him seventy fine articles of clothing and other adornments [including a crown], so the man will try them on, as well as setting the crown upon his head.

The angel, who will also be accompanied by ten thousand youthful attendants, resembling hidden pearls, will then say to the man: "O saintly friend of Allāh *[yā waliyya 'llāh]*, you must mount up and ride, for

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[198] These guardian angels are mentioned in the Qur'ān:

And yet over you there are watchers,	*wa inna 'alai-kum la-ḥāfiẓīn:*
Noble Recorders, who know	*Kirāman Kātibīn:*
whatever you do. (82:10–12)	*ya'lamūna mā taf'alūn.*

According to the traditional commentaries, every human being is constantly supervised by two of these guardian angels, one on the right hand to record the person's good deeds, and one on the left to record the bad deeds committed.

this wondrous thoroughbred she-camel belongs to you, as do others just like her." He will thereupon adopt her as his means of transport, availing himself of the fact that she has a pair of wings, and that the range of her every stride extends to the farthest point in sight.

Riding along on the back of his fabulous thoroughbred she-camel, with ten thousand youthful attendants ever on duty in his presence, and still accompanied by the two angels who were always with him in this lower world, the man will now keep traveling until he reaches his palatial mansions, and makes himself at home in them.

Then Allāh (Glorious and Exalted is He) has told us [that it will be said unto them]:

"Behold, this… *inna hādhā*

In other words, all this that has been described for your benefit, in this form *[ṣūra]* and in this chapter *[sūra]* of the Qur'ān…[199]

is a reward for you. *kāna la-kum jazā'an*

That is to say, it is a reward for those deeds of yours that deserve to be well recompensed.

And your endeavor [upon earth]… *wa kāna sa'yu-kum…*

That is to say, your work *['amal]*…

has found acceptance." (76:22) *mashkūrā.*

In other words, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has acknowledged the merit of your deeds, and He has therefore rewarded you with the Garden of Paradise.

This brings us to the end of the Fourth Discourse.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn].

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[199] From a linguist's point of view, it is interesting to note the decidedly unusual occurrence—directly side by side in the original Arabic sentence—of the two words *sura* [form] and *sura* [chapter of the Qur'ān]. (In the Arabic script, the difference in pronunciation—and consequently in meaning—is clearly indicated by spelling the former with the initial letter *ṣād*, and the latter with the initial letter *sīn*.)

Appendix to the First Discourse[411]

Concerning the episode of the original "Satanic Verses"

In view of the crucial importance of this historical episode, from which Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has drawn the extremely valuable lessons contained in the First Discourse of this Chapter of al-Ghunya, it seems desirable to supply the reader with the full account provided in the Sīra [Biography] of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as reported by the celebrated historian Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī (d. A.H. 310/923 C.E.):[412]

The following account was related to me by Ya'qūb ibn Ibrāhīm, who heard the report from Ibn 'Ulayya, on the authority of Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq, who heard it from Sa'īd ibn Mīnā, the freedman *[maulā]* of Abu'l-Bakhtarī:

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was met by al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīra, al-'Āṣ ibn Wā'il [as-Sahmī], al-Aswad ibn al-Muṭṭalib ibn Asad ibn 'Abd al-'Uzzā, and Umayya ibn Khalaf—all men of good repute among their own people.[413] They said: "O Muḥammad, come now, let us worship what you worship, and you worship what we worship. Let us all get together in this matter. If what you worship is better than what we worship, we can participate in it with you and take our share of it, and if what we worship is better than what you worship, you can participate in it with us and take your share of it."

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[412] The version supplied in this Appendix is a translation from the Arabic text of *Ta'rīkh aṭ-Ṭabarī*, published by Al-'Alamī Library, Beirut, Lebanon, A.H. 1403/1984 C.E., vol. 2, pp. 75–7.

[413] According to some traditional reports, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was making a circumambulation of the Ka'ba when this meeting took place.

On crossing the bridge of Hell and entering the Garden of Paradise, as explained by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in a traditional report that has been handed down to us on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

According to Abū Huraira[359] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to say:

> The bridge of Hell *[jisr Jahannam]* has seven arches. The distance between each pair of arches is equal to that of a journey taking seventy years, while the width of the bridge is like the sharp edge of a sword. The first group of people will cross over it as quickly as it takes to blink an eye. The second group, at the speed of a brief flash of lightning. The third group, at the speed of a violent gust of wind. The fourth group, at the speed of birds. The fifth group, at the speed of horses. The sixth group, at the speed of a man in a hurry. As for the seventh group, they will cross over it at an ordinary walking pace.
>
> When all seven groups have crossed over, one man will still be waiting, which means that he will be the very last to cross that bridge. "Cross over!" he will be told, so he will set his two feet upon it, but one of them will slip. Then he will straddle the bridge and try crawling along it on his knees, but the Fire of Hell will lick at his hair and his skin as he does so.
>
> He will continue to wriggle along on his belly, for his other foot will slip, leaving him with one hand holding fast, while the other hand dangles loose. The Fire of Hell will attack him in that position, so he will suppose that he has no chance of escaping from its clutches. Nevertheless, he will continue to wriggle along on his belly, until he finally succeeds in getting beyond its reach. As soon as he is clear of it, he will look at it and say: "Blessed be the One who has delivered me from you! I cannot imagine that my Lord has ever given anyone, in ancient or modern times, the likes of what He has given me! He did indeed deliver me from you, after I had seen you and met you face to face!"
>
> One of the angels will then approach him, take him by the hand, and lead him to a pond in front of the entrance to the Garden of Paradise. The angel will say to him: "Bathe yourself in this pond, and drink from it."

[359] See note 226 on p. 163 above.

his tongue: "These are the exalted *Gharānīq*,[417] whose intercession is approved."[418]

When [the people of the tribe of] Quraish heard this, they were delighted and greatly pleased at the way in which he spoke of their gods, and they listened to him; while the believers were firmly convinced that what their Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had brought them from their Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) was true, not suspecting a mistake or a vain desire or a slip. When he reached the prostration [mentioned in the last verse of the Sūra] and the end of the Sūra in which he prostrated himself, the Muslims prostrated themselves when their Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) bowed down in prostration, confirming what he had brought and obeying his command.

The idolatrous polytheists of Quraish and others who were in the mosque also prostrated themselves when they heard the mention of their gods, so that everyone in the mosque, believer and unbeliever alike, bowed down in prostration, except al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīra, who was an old man who could not do so, and who therefore took a handful of dust from the valley and bent over it.

Then the people dispersed, and Quraish went out, delighted at what had been said about their gods, saying: "Muhammad has spoken of our gods in splendid fashion. He alleged in what he recited that they are the exalted *Gharānīq* whose intercession is approved."

The news reached the companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who were in Abyssinia. It was being reported that Quraish had accepted Islām, so some men started to return while others remained behind.

Then Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and said: "What have you done, O Muhammad? You have recited to these people something I did not bring you from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and you have said what He did not say to you."

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[417] See note [8] above.

[418] *tilka'l-gharānīqu'l-'ulā—'indahā'sh-shafā'atu turtaḍā*. Another traditionally accepted reading—*turtajā* ('to be hoped for')—is the one adopted by Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him). See p. 4 above.

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was bitterly grieved and was greatly in fear of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). So Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) sent down [a revelation], for He was merciful to him, comforting him and making light of the affair and telling him that every Prophet and Messenger before him had experienced the kind of longing he had felt, and had wanted what he wanted, and that Satan had interjected something into their desires, just as he had on his tongue.

So Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) annulled what Satan had suggested, and Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) established His verses *[āyāt]*. That is to say, He assured him that he was just like the [earlier] Prophets and Messengers. Then Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) sent down the revelation:

> We have not sent a Messenger or a Prophet before you without it happening that, when he experienced a longing, Satan cast suggestions into his longing. But Allāh will annul what Satan has suggested. Then Allāh will establish His revelations—surely Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (22:52)[419]

Thus Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) relieved His Prophet's grief, and made him feel safe from his fears; and He annulled what Satan had suggested in the above-mentioned words about their gods, by His revelation (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> Are yours the males and His the females? That would indeed be an unfair division! They are nothing but names which you and your fathers have given them, for which Allāh has sent down no authority. They follow nothing but surmise and that which they themselves desire. And yet guidance from their Lord has come to them! Or shall man have whatever he fancies?
>
> But to Allāh belongs the Last and the First. How many an angel there is in the heavens whose intercession is of no avail, except after Allāh gives leave to whomever He wills and is well pleased. (53:21–26)

In other words, how can the intercession of their gods avail with Him (Almighty and Glorious is He)?

When the annulment of what Satan had put upon the tongue of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) came from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), Quraish said: "Muḥammad has repented of what he said about the position of your gods in relation to his tongue: "These are the exalted *Gharānīq*,[417] whose intercession is approved."[418]

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[419] Also clearly relevant here is the immediately following verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān:

> That He may make that which Satan suggested a temptation to those whose hearts are diseased and hardened. (22:53)

When [the people of the tribe of] Quraish heard this, they were delighted and greatly pleased at the way in which he spoke of their gods, and they listened to him; while the believers were firmly convinced that what their Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had brought them from their Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) was true, not suspecting a mistake or a vain desire or a slip. When he reached the prostration [mentioned in the last verse of the Sūra] and the end of the Sūra in which he prostrated himself, the Muslims prostrated themselves when their Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) bowed down in prostration, confirming what he had brought and obeying his command.

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Invocation. A series of invocations, by which the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) seeks refuge with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) from the Devil and from a wide range of specific evils and temptations, 42–43. A series of invocations, each beginning with: "In the Name of Allāh, who… *[Bismi'llāhi 'lladhī…]*," 95–96. Benefits obtained by those who invoke the Divine Mercy by saying: "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*," 103. See Spiritual development

Khawāṭir. See Notions

Lammatān. See Tremors

Mujāhada. See Struggle

Name. Special merit of "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Raḥmāni'r-Raḥīm]*," 72–80. See Allāh; Blessing; Forgiveness; Interpretation; Invocation; Solomon; Spiritual development

Notions. The six 'notions' *[khawāṭir]* that may arise within the human heart, 32–35. Passages from other works by Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), in which further light is shed on the subject of 'notions' *[khawāṭir]*, 36–40

Pious restraint. The pious restraint *[wara']* which must be observed by the penitent in every aspect of his future conduct, 161–176. Finer points of pious restraint *[wara']*, as illustrated by stories told about the Prophets, the saints and the righteous, 177–79. Ten obligations that must be discharged before pious restraint *[wara']* can acquire its full significance, 180–81

Raḥīm. See Name

Raḥmān. See Name

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- They refuse to acknowledge any of the attributes *[ṣifāt]* of the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He).

Exalted is Allāh, far beyond everything of this kind!

2. The Ṣāliḥiyya have come to be so called for the simple reason that they profess the theological doctrine of Abu'l-Ḥusain aṣ-Ṣāliḥī. The latter used to state his doctrine in the following terms: "Faith is knowledge *[al-īmān huwa'l-ma'rifa]*, while unbelief is ignorance *[wa'l-kufr huwa'l-jahl]*." He declared that the threefold repetition of this statement could never constitute unbelief *[kufr]*, even if the only person who ever expressed it should happen to be an unbeliever *[kāfir]*. He also maintained that there is no religious duty *['ibāda]*, with the exception of faith alone.

3. As for the Yūnusiyya, their name and origin can be traced to Yūnus al-Barī' [the Innocent].[74] The latter used to state his doctrine in the following terms: "Faith is knowledge, submissive obedience, and love for Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)."[75] He declared that if any individual was found lacking in any of these virtues, that person must be an unbeliever *[kāfir]*.

4. As for the Shamiriyya, their name and origin can be traced to a man called Abū Shamir.[76] The latter used to state his doctrine in the following terms: "Faith is knowledge, and submissive obedience, and love, and the affirmation that He is Unique *[Wāḥid]*, that there is nothing like unto Him. All of this taken together is what constitutes faith."

Abū Shamir also declared: "I would never refer to someone who had committed a major sin *[kabīra]* as an unrighteous person *[fāsiq]* in the absolute sense. I would always qualify my statement by saying that he is unrighteous in this or that particular respect."

5. As for the Yūnāniyya, their name indicates that they can trace their origin to Greece *[Yūnān]*.[77] They maintained that faith is knowledge and the affirmation of belief in Allāh and His Messengers,[78] and that if something does not make good sense to the logical mind, one should not do it.

[74] Also known as Yūnus ibn 'Awn.

[75] *al-īmānu huwa'l-ma'rifatu wa'l-khuḍū'u wa'l-maḥabbatu li'llāhi ('azza wa jall).*

[76] According to A.J. Wensinck, in his article MURJI'A in *SEI*, 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī refers to this person as Abū Shāmir, and to his followers as the Shāmiriyya (spelled in each case with a long –ā–).

[77] Possibly to one of several Greek settlements in the Arab world, where a number of villages bear the name Yūnān.

[78] *al-īmānu huwa'l-ma'rifatu wa'l-iqrāru bi'llāhi wa rusulih.*

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their sales. And what will be done with the tithe, once it has been collected from them? Surely the Muslims will put it to good use!"

If *ḥalāl* could only mean lawful in essence or substance [*ḥalāl ʿain*], it would not be permissible to collect such a tithe, because wine and pigs and the proceeds from their sale are all intrinsically unlawful [*ḥarām*]. It has been made lawful in practice, however, in order to provide a valuable opportunity for constructive action.

As someone put it: "Between that which is lawful [*ḥalāl*] and that which is unlawful [*ḥarām*] there is a valuable opportunity."

In order to avail himself of this valuable opportunity, the believer must grasp the sacred law [*sharʿ*] and hold it in his hand like a lamp. He must make it the criterion by which to decide what he should take for himself and what he should give to others. He must not resort to fanciful interpretations in order to get around it, and he must never depart from it completely. He must take only that which the sacred law allows him to accept, and give only that which the sacred law permits him to give, and every aspect of his behavior must come to be in conformity with the sacred law.

Whatever he consumes must be lawful according to the sacred law, but he is not obliged to go looking for sustenance that is absolutely lawful in terms of its intrinsic nature [*al-ḥalāl al-muṭlaq al-ʿain*], since this is virtually impossible to find. It is almost entirely beyond the scope of human experience, except that Allāh may wish to confer it upon some of His saints [*awliyāʾ*] and chosen ones [*aṣfiyāʾ*].

> And that is no great matter for Allāh. (14:20)

From the standpoint of the kind of food that is lawful for them to eat, we can distinguish three separate types of people: (1) the ordinary person who is conscientious in doing his duty [*muttaqī*]; (2) the saint [*walī*]; and (3) the spiritual deputy who is endowed with intuitive knowledge [*badal ʿārif*].

1. In the case of the ordinary person who is conscientious in doing his duty [*muttaqī*], that which is lawful [*ḥalāl*] is that which does not cause him to incur any liability toward his fellow creatures, and that does not render him subject to a penalty prescribed by the sacred law [*sharʿ*].

2. In the case of the genuine saint [*walī muḥaqq*], since he is abstinent to the point of being completely detached from the influence of the

namely, Rajab, while the other three occur in consecutive sequence [in the Islāmic calendar].[1]

In this context, the expression: "That is the right *dīn*" means: "...the right and proper computation *[ḥisāb]*."

As for the sentence: "So do not wrong yourselves in them," the meaning is: "...in the sacred months." Allāh (Exalted is He) has applied this prohibition to these four months specifically, in order to make us clearly understand that they deserve particular respect because of the magnitude of their holiness. In other words, it is in order to emphasize their special importance that He mentions them explicitly, rather than any of the other months, in connection with the prohibition of wrongdoing, although wrongdoing is actually forbidden during all the months of the year.

To clarify this point still further, let us consider a similar instance. Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Be careful to observe your prayers, and [especially] the middle prayer. (2:238)	*ḥāfiẓū ʿala 'ṣ-ṣalawāti* *wa 'ṣ-ṣalāti 'l-wusṭā.*

In this particular verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān, the emphasis is placed on the duty to observe the "middle" prayer, meaning the mid-afternoon prayer *[ʿaṣr]*. Although the commandment actually applies comprehensively to all observance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, the "middle" prayer has been singled out for special mention, in order to stress the importance of treating it with particular respect.[2]

The prohibition of wrongdoing *[ẓulm]* in the sacred months can be interpreted to mean: "During those months, you must not kill any of the Arabs who are guilty of polytheism *[mushrikī 'l-ʿArab]*, unless they take the initiative where killing is concerned."

Abū Yazīd [al-Bisṭāmī][3] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "Wrongdoing *[ẓulm]* means the renunciation of obedience to Allāh (Exalted is He) and the perpetration of acts of sinful disobedience against Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)." Wrongdoing was also what someone else had in mind, when he said: "It means putting something in a place where it does not belong."

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[1] Rajab is the seventh month of the Islāmic calendar, while Dhu 'l-Qaʿda, Dhu 'l-Ḥijja and Muḥarram are the eleventh, twelfth and first months, respectively.

[2] As ʿAbdullāh Yūsuf ʿAlī remarks, in a footnote to his translation of this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*, "This [mid-afternoon prayer] is apt to be most neglected, and yet this is the most necessary to remind us of God in the midst of our worldly affairs."

[3] Abū Yazīd Ṭaifūr ibn ʿĪsā ibn Surūshān al-Bisṭāmī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), whose grandfather Surūshān was a Zoroastrian, was born in the district of Bisṭām in northeastern Persia, and it was there that he died in A.H. 261 or 264/874 or 877 C.E. His mausoleum still stands as a place of pious visitation. He is famous for the boldness of his utterances, and is regarded as the founder of the ecstatic or "drunken" school of Islāmic mysticism (as opposed to the "sober" school founded by al-Junaid).

Allāh (Exalted is He) goes on to say: "And wage all-out war on those who attribute partners [to Allāh]," referring to the unbelievers *[kuffār]* of Mecca, "just as they are waging all-out war on you." In other words: "If they wage war on you during the sacred month, wage all-out war on them!" Then, when He says: "And know that Allāh is with those who are truly devoted [to His service]," He means that He is ready to support them in their efforts.

As for the correct interpretation of the phrase *ad-dīn al-qayyim* [usually translated as "the right religion"], there is some difference of opinion among the experts in the science of Qur'ānic exegesis *[ahl at-tafsīr]*. According to Muqātil (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), *ad-dīn al-qayyim* is synonymous with *ad-dīn al-ḥaqq* [the true religion]. There are those who maintain that it is synonymous with *ad-dīn aṣ-ṣādiq* [the authentic religion], meaning the religion of Islām. Some say that it is a synonym for *dīn al-Ḥanīfiyya* [the religion of the Ḥanīfs],[4] while yet others interpret *ad-dīn al-qayyim* as meaning: "that which Allāh has commanded the Muslims to practice."

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[4] The term *al-Ḥanīfiyya* could be translated "Ḥanīf-ism." According to the Arabic lexicographers, the term *ḥanīf* (the plural of which is *ḥunafā'*) means:

- Inclining to a right state or tendency.
- Inclining from one religion to another.
- Inclining from any false religion to the true religion.
- Inclining in a perfect manner to Islām, and continuing firm therein.
- One who is of the religion of Abraham (peace be upon him).

The singular form *ḥanīf* occurs ten times in the Qur'ān (2:135, 3:67, 3:95, 4:125, 6:80, 6:161, 10:105, 16:120, 16:123, 30:31.) There are also two occurrences of the plural form *ḥunafā'* (22:31, 98:5.) In six of these Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]* the reference is to Abraham (peace be upon him) and his religion *[milla]*. In the other verses, the term *ḥanīf* (or *ḥunafā'*) is used—without specific reference to Abraham (peace be upon him)—of a person (or people) 'turning only toward Allāh' or 'turning only toward the true religion *[dīn]*.' In the traditional accounts of the early stages of Islām, the term is also applied to those who—as Hughes puts it in his *Dictionary of Islām*—"had endeavored to search for the truth among the mass of conflicting dogmas and superstitions of the religions that existed in Arabia."

Concerning the etymological derivation of the word *Rajab*.

In the technical terminology of Arabic linguistics, *Rajab* is classed as a derivative noun [*ism mushtaqq*]. Its meaning can be deduced from the fact that *r-j-b*, the triconsonantal root from which it is derived, conveys the basic idea of "honor; veneration." In the speech of the desert Arabs, the verbal noun *tarjīb* is a synonym for *ta'ẓīm* [to magnify, glorify, honor, venerate], so the corresponding verb is used in the expression: "I have venerated [*rajjabtu*] this month."

The passive participle *murajjab* occurs in the famous saying of al-Ḥubāb ibn al-Mundhir ibn al-Jamūḥ, which he uttered on the day of the argument in the roofed passage known as the Portico of the Banī Sā'ida, on the day when Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was taken from this world [*tuwuffiya*]. The Emigrants [*Muhājirūn*] and the Helpers [*Anṣār*][5] were in dispute over the question of whom to appoint as a leader, so the Helpers said: "Let one of us be a leader, and let one of you be a leader as well!" The story is widely known, so let me get straight to the point where al-Ḥubāb became so angry that he drew his sword and cried: "I am their much-rubbed little rubbing post, and their respectfully propped-up [*murajjab*] little palm-tree loaded with fruit." This was his way of saying: "I am the mighty one among my people, the one who commands their obedience."

The fruitful little palm tree called *'udhaiq*, which is the diminutive form of *'adhq*, is a date palm held in great respect by its owners, who would take great care to prop it up whenever it bent too far over to one side, in case it should topple right over. The term *rujba* is applied to the structure erected around the date palm to keep it propped up. As for the much-rubbed little rubbing post (*judhail*, the diminutive form of *jidhl*),

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[5] Of the Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), those who had migrated, i.e., had made the *Hijra* from Mecca to Medina, were known as the Emigrants [*Muhājirūn*], while those who had embraced Islām in Medina were known as the Helpers [*Anṣār*].

There is a saying to the effect that the act of repaying one *dānaq* [small coin][228] of silver is more meritorious in the sight of Allāh than six hundred pilgrimages, all of them blessed with acceptance *[ḥujja mabrūra]*. (According to another version: "than seventy pilgrimages, all of them worthy of acceptance.")

In the words of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "Tomorrow [in the life hereafter], those who sit at ease in the company of Allāh (Exalted is He) will be those who have practiced pious restraint and abstinence *[ahl al-waraʿ wa'z-zuhd]*."

It was Ibn al-Mubārak[229] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "To decline the unlawful offer of a single penny *[fals]*[230] is more meritorious in the sight of Allāh than donating one hundred pennies to charitable causes."

The following story is told about Ibn al-Mubārak: He once spent some time in Syria, for the purpose of making a written record of the traditions *[ḥadīth]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). While he was engaged in this activity, the pen he was using happened to break, so he borrowed another pen from one of the local residents. Then, when he had finished writing, he absentmindedly slipped the pen into his own pen case.

It was not till much later, by which time he had already returned to his home in Merv, that Ibn al-Mubārak set eyes on that pen again. He recognized it as the one he had borrowed, so he immediately set about making preparations for another long trip to Syria, for the sole purpose of giving the pen back to its owner.

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[228] The *dānaq* was valued at one sixth of a dirham.

[229] Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ʿAbdu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak al-Ḥanẓalī al-Marwazī was born in A.H. 118/736 C.E. The son of a Turkish father and a Persian mother, he studied under many teachers in Merv and elsewhere, and became erudite in many branches of learning, including grammar and literature. Although he was a wealthy merchant, he was renowned for the ascetic quality of his personal lifestyle, and he distributed much of his wealth in alms to the poor. Of his many learned works on the traditions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the one that has survived is devoted to the theme of asceticism.

[230] The *fals* (pronounced *fils* in colloquial Arabic) is a small copper coin.

[231] Abū ʿAbd'illāh an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr ibn Saʿd al-Khazrajī (d. A.H. 74). After having served as governor of Kufa and Ḥims, under the Umayyad Caliph Yazīd, he joined the revolt of ʿAbd'ullāh ibn az-Zubair and was killed.

Rahma [Mercy] of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), while the middle letter *jīm* stands for the *Jūd* [Noble Generosity] of Allāh (Exalted is He), and the final letter *bā'* stands for the *Birr* [Beneficent Kindness] of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). This indicates that three gifts from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) are available to His servants from the very beginning of this month right through to its very end, namely, the Mercy of Allāh without any hint of punishment, Noble Generosity without any hint of stinginess, and Beneficent Kindness without any hint of harsh treatment.

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in unbelief, by which the unbelievers are led astray. (9:37)	*yuḍallu bi-hi 'lladhīna kafarū.*

The historical background to this is as follows: When the Arabs of the Time of Ignorance *[Jāhiliyya]* were about to make the return journey from Minā [at the conclusion of the Pilgrimage], it was customary for a man called Nu'aim ibn Tha'laba, the tribal chief of the Banī Kināna, to stand up and say: "I am surely not one to be accused of a sin or reproached with a fault *[lā uhābu wa lā u'ābu]*, nor is a judgment of mine to be rejected." They would then say to him: "You have spoken the truth. Now postpone a month for us!" What they meant by this was: "For our convenience, defer the sacredness of the month of Muḥarram and shift it to the month of Ṣafar,[11] so that we can treat Muḥarram as profane." Their motive was simply to avoid having three months in a row during which they could not engage in predatory expeditions, since raiding for plunder and pillage had come to be their regular means of livelihood. The postponement *[insā']*[12] would be effective for one year,[13] and then they would revert to the situation where Muḥarram was regarded as sacred and Ṣafar as free from taboo.

This should help to explain why the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) added a qualifying word to the name Rajab, and why he defined it by placing it between two points of reference. In the first place, he called it Rajab Muḍar [The Rajab of the tribe of Muḍar], because the tribe of Muḍar had always gone to great lengths in extolling its dignity, exalting its importance, and respecting its sacredness. In the second place, he fixed its position in the calendar by stating categorically that it comes between Jumādā and Sha'bān, as a precaution against the kind of juggling to and fro that happened when the sacredness of Muḥarram was transferred to Ṣafar. By drawing attention to the special quality of the month, and by fixing its position in the calendar, he emphasized its importance and made sure that it would be treated as sacred for all time to come.

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[11] Ṣafar is the second month in the Islāmic calendar.

[12] **Author's note:** This concept of postponement *[insā'*, from the triliteral root *n-s-']* has given rise to the expressions: *nasa'a 'llāhu fī ajalihi* and *ansa'a 'llāhu ajalahu* [both meaning: "Allāh has postponed his appointed term, i.e., prolonged his life."]

[13] As E. W. Lane points out (in his *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. N–S–'): "This [postponement], as appears from what is said in the Qur'ān 9:37, was not done every year." He is referring to the second sentence in that verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān, immediately following the sentence quoted in the text above, where Allāh (Exalted is He) says:

One year they treat it as profane, and another year they treat it as sacred *[yuḥillūnahu 'āman wa yuḥarrimūnahu 'āman]*.

For one thing, he maintained that human beings are creators of their own actions, a conclusion which no one had arrived at before him. He also used to profess the following eccentric teachings:

- That Allāh (Exalted is He) is obeying His servants, whenever He does what they wish.
- If someone takes an oath to the effect that he will give his creditor his due on the following day, and if he qualifies this statement by saying, "if Allāh wills [*in shā' a'llāh*]," the qualification gives him no advantage, and he will therefore be guilty of perjury if he does not pay up.
- If someone steals the value of five dirhams [silver coins], that person is to be classed as a *fāsiq* [an immoral person; one who falls short of the legal standard of rectitude under Islamic law, and is therefore unacceptable as a witness]. This does not apply, however, if the value of what is stolen is less, even by a tiny amount.

5. The Bahshamiyya,[102] trace their origin to Abū Hāshim ibn al-Jubbā'ī.[103] This Abū Hāshim used to maintain that it is possible to conceive of the sane adult [*mukallaf*] as potentially active [*qādir*], even though he may be neither performing nor refraining from an action, so Allāh (Exalted is He) will punish him for his deed [as if he had actually done it].

Abū Hāshim also used to maintain that, if a person repents of all his sins but one, his repentance cannot be regarded as valid, not even with respect to the sins of which he has repented.

6. As for the Ka‘biyya, they trace their name and origin to a certain Abu'l-Qāsim al-Ka‘bī,[104] who was a native of Baghdād. He refused to accept that Allāh is All-Hearing [*Samī‘*], All-Seeing [*Baṣīr*], and denied that He exercises any will in reality. According to his teaching, the will [*irāda*] of Allāh (Exalted is He) in relation to the action of His servants is the commandment [*amr*] to perform it, and His will in relation to His own action is His knowledge and the absence of constraint.

Abu'l-Qāsim al-Ka‘bī also maintained that the entire universe is a composite whole [*mala'*]; that anything that moves is no more than the

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[102] The name Bahshamiyya has been formed as a kind of acronym from Abū Hāshim, the name of the founder of the sect, by taking the letter *bā'* from Abū and the three root letters *hā'–shīn–mīm* from Hāshim.

[103] Son of the aforementioned founder of the Jubbā'iyya.

[104] See note [93] on p. 429 above.

the heads from their spears and arrows. As a result, the clash of arms and the swishing noise of spears would not be heard for the duration of the month. A man might have gone out riding in search of his father's killer, but if he spotted him during Rajab he would not confront him. He would act as if he could neither see him nor hear him. This explains why it was called the 'Deaf' month."

Some say that it came to be called 'Deaf' because it was never possible to hear the wrath of Allāh (Exalted is He) being vented against any group of people during this month. This was because Allāh (Exalted is He) had chastised the nations of yore during the other months, but He had never punished any community *[umma]* during this month. It was in this month, they say, that Allāh put Noah *[Nūḥ]* aboard the ark *[safīna]*, in which he and those who accompanied him were to spend the next six months.

According to one report, it was Ibrāhīm an-Nakhaʿī who said: "Rajab is the month of Allāh (Exalted is He). It was in this month that Allāh put Noah aboard the ark. Noah (peace be upon him) then spent the month fasting aboard the ark, and he ordered those who accompanied him to keep the same fast, so Allāh (Exalted is He) kept him and those who were with him safe from the flood *[ṭūfān]*, while He purified the earth by ridding it of idolatrous polytheism *[shirk]* and aggressive behavior *[ʿudwān]*."

According to some other traditional authorities, a version of this saying can be traced all the way back to the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace). One such report is that of Hibatu'llāh, who informs us, on the strength of a chain of transmission *[isnād]* via Abū Ḥāzim from Sahl ibn Saʿd (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> There can be no doubt that Rajab is one of the sacred months. It was in this month that Allāh put Noah aboard the ark. Noah (peace be upon him) then spent the month fasting aboard the ark, and he ordered those who accompanied him to keep the same fast, so Allāh (Exalted is He) delivered them and kept them safe from drowning, while Allāh used the flood *[ṭūfān]* to purify the earth by ridding it of unbelief *[kufr]* and tyranny *[ṭughyān]*.

Someone said: "It is called 'Deaf' because it is deaf to your crude and erroneous behavior, although it is a receptive listener to your meritorious and honorable conduct, O believer *[yā muʾmin]*! Allāh (Exalted is He) has made it deaf to your crude and erroneous behavior, so that, instead of testifying against you on that score on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, it will be a witness in your favor, testifying to what it heard of your meritorious conduct and excellent behavior in the course of the month."

4. As for the name *Shahru'llāh al-Aṣabb* [The Bountiful Month of Allāh], the meaning it conveys is that Divine Mercy *[Raḥma]* comes pouring down *[taṣubbu ṣabban]* upon His servants during this month, and that Allāh (Exalted is He) grants them generous favors and rewards the like of which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and no human heart has ever conceived.

Relevant in this context is the traditional report related to us by Imām Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). According to this report, transmitted on good authority,[17] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The number of the months in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He) is twelve months. [They were already inscribed] in the Book of Allāh on the day when He created the heavens and the earth. Four of them are sacred: Rajab, which is called Shahru'llāh al-Aṣamm [The 'Deaf' Month of Allāh], and three others that occur in sequence, namely, Dhu 'l-Qa'da, Dhu 'l-Ḥijja and Muḥarram. It should also be noted that Rajab is Allāh's month, while Sha'bān is my month, and Ramaḍān is the month of my Community *[Ummatī]*.
>
> If someone has fasted for one day in the month of Rajab, in a spirit of faith *[īmānan]* and reckoning on a reward in the hereafter *[iḥtisāban]*, he will deserve the greatest favor *[riḍwān]* of Allāh, and he will be lodged in the highest Paradise *[Firdaus]*.
>
> If someone has fasted for two days in that month, he will merit a twofold reward, and the weight of each of the two parts will be like that of the mountains of this world.
>
> If someone has fasted for three days in Rajab, Allāh will cause a trench to be dug between him and the Fire of Hell, a trench so wide that it would take a whole year to travel from one side of it to the other.
>
> If someone has fasted for four days in Rajab, he will be immunized against such afflictions as insanity *[junūn]*,[18] elephantiasis *[judhām]* and leprosy *[baraṣ]*,[19] and also against the mischief of the False Messiah *[al-Masīḥ ad-Dajjāl]*

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[17] **Author's note:** The chain of transmission *[isnād]* cited by Imām Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is as follows: **al-A'mash—Ibrāhīm [an-Nakha'ī]—'Alqama—Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[18] The term *junūn* is derived from the same triconsonantal root—*j-n-n*—as the words *jinn* and *jinnī*. It originally signified "a state of possession by a *jinnī* or by several *jinn*."

[19] The term *baraṣ* is applied particularly to the malignant species of leprosy termed "leuce." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *B–R–Ṣ*.)

If someone has fasted for five days in Rajab, he will be sheltered from the torment of the tomb [*ʿadhāb al-qabr*].

If someone has fasted for six days in Rajab, he will emerge from his grave [at the Resurrection] with his face shining brighter than the moon on the night when it is full [*lailat al-badr*].

If someone has fasted for seven days in Rajab, Allāh will lock each of the seven gates of Hell [*Jahannam*] to make sure that he stays out of it, one gate for each of his seven days of fasting.

If someone has fasted for eight days in Rajab, Allāh will open each of the eight gates of the Garden of Paradise for his benefit, one gate for each of his eight days of fasting.

If someone has fasted for nine days in Rajab, he will cry out as he emerges from his grave [at the Resurrection], "I testify that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh [*ashhadu allā ilāha illa 'llāh*]," and his gaze will not be deflected toward anything short of the Garden of Paradise.

If someone has fasted for ten days in Rajab, Allāh (Exalted is He) will provide him with a mattress on which to rest in comfort at every milestone on the Narrow Bridge [*Ṣirāṭ*].

If someone has fasted for eleven days in Rajab, it will be obvious at the Resurrection that no one is more deserving than he, except those who have fasted as much or even more.

If someone has fasted for twelve days in Rajab, Allāh (Exalted is He) will clothe him in two garments, and one of these garments alone will be better than this world and all that it contains.

If someone has fasted for thirteen days in Rajab, a table will be spread for him on the Day of Resurrection in the shade of the Heavenly Throne [*ʿArsh*], so that he can eat from it while most of the people are in dire distress.

If someone has fasted for fourteen days in Rajab, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will grant him gifts the like of which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and no human heart has ever conceived.

If someone has fasted for fifteen days in Rajab, Allāh (Exalted is He) will install him on the Day of Resurrection in the station of those who are safe and secure [*āminīn*], and no favored angel [*malak muqarrab*] or Prophet-Messenger [*Nabī Mursal*] will pass him by without saying to him, "Congratulations to you, for you are one of those who are safe and secure!"

In a different version of this report, the list is carried on beyond fifteen:

If someone has fasted for sixteen days in Rajab, he will be among the first to visit the All-Merciful [*ar-Raḥmān*], to behold Him, and to hear His speech.

If someone has fasted for seventeen days in Rajab, Allāh will set up a comfortable rest stop for him at every milestone on the Narrow Bridge [*Ṣirāṭ*]

If someone has fasted for eighteen days in Rajab, he will rub shoulders with Abraham (peace be upon him) in his domed pavilion [*qubba*].

fact that drinking it has become a regular habit, and the self-induced illusion that he is using it as a medicine to cure his ailments.

It is true, of course, that the use of alcohol for medicinal purposes may sometimes be prescribed for us, but the addict's view is distorted by the devil *[shaiṭān]*, who cunningly helps him to see his addiction in a favorable light, and by the sheer force of his own appetite for liquor. He drinks it for the sake of the pleasure and enjoyment it provides, in order to banish his cares and worries, and because it is supposed to be good for one's physical health.

The more he becomes addicted to it, the more it makes him oblivious to the disastrous consequences that lie in store for him. It makes him heedless of the punishment that Allāh will eventually inflict upon him on account of his addiction. It makes him unaware of its corrupting influence on his religious values and his worldly affairs alike, because it erodes the rational faculty, the faculty that is used to balance religious and worldly interests and keep them in good array.

When we maintain the validity of repenting some of these sins but not others, we are simply acknowledging the inescapable fact that the record of every Muslim, for all practical purposes, is bound to show a combination of worshipful obedience to Allāh and sinful disobedience toward Him. Individuals differ, of course, but only in the specific details of their case histories. As for the enormity or triviality of particular sins, this is a relative question, since it all depends on the spiritual states of the people concerned, and whether they are close to Allāh or distant from Him.

The inveterate transgressor *[fāsiq]* would therefore do well to say: "If the devil *[shaiṭān]* succeeds, by means of some irresistible temptation, in coercing me to commit certain acts of sinful disobedience, there is no need for me to let go of the reins completely, to abandon all semblance of restraint, and then freely indulge in every kind of sin. Instead of simply giving up the struggle, I shall at least make the effort to single out a few sins that I could give up without too much trouble, then I shall stop committing them.

My success in dealing with some of the problems may serve as an atonement *[kaffāra]* for some of the rest. Perhaps Allāh will notice that I am afraid of offending Him by committing certain sinful acts of

Shaikh Imām Hibatu'llāh also cites traditional authority[22] for the following report: "A man once asked Abū 'd-Dardā'[23] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) about fasting during the month of Rajab, so he said to him: 'You have asked me about a month that was venerated even by the people of the Time of Ignorance *[Jāhiliyya]*, in spite of their state of ignorance, and Islām has simply added to the respect and veneration with which it is regarded. If someone has fasted for one day during this month, and if he has done so voluntarily, reckoning on the reward of Allāh (Exalted is He) and motivated by the sincere desire to win His favor, that one-day fast of his will extinguish the wrath of Allāh (Exalted is He) and He will lock one of the gates by which he might otherwise enter the Fire of Hell. Even if he were given enough gold to fill the earth, it would not be an adequate recompense for him. Nothing belonging to this world could possibly represent full compensation, which he can only receive on the Day of Reckoning *[Yaum al-Ḥisāb]*.

"'When evening comes [at the end of his day of fasting], he is entitled to receive a positive response to each of ten prayers of supplication *[da'awāt]*. He may take this as an opportunity to pray for some immediate worldly benefit, in which case Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant him his request. Otherwise, good things will be held in store for him, and these will be things of the most excellent quality, such as might be prayed for by a supplicant who is numbered among the saints *[awliyā']* of Allāh (Exalted is He) and among those chosen friends of His who always affirm the truth *[asfiyā'ihi 's-sādiqīn]*.

"'If someone has fasted for two days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits, but he will also be granted an extra reward. This will be equivalent to the reward earned by ten of the champions of truth *[siddīqīn]* in the course of their entire lives, however long their lives may have lasted. He will also be entitled to intercede [on behalf of his fellow creatures] in cases similar to those in which they are entitled to intercede. He will be counted as a member of their group, so that he will enter the Garden of Paradise together with them, and he will be regarded as one of their close companions.

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[22] **Author's note**: In this case, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* cited by Shaikh Imām Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is as follows: **al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdu'llāh al-Muqri—al-'Alā' ibn Kathīr—Makḥūl** (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[23] Abu 'd-Dardā' al-Khazrajī al-Anṣārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was a Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). Renowned for his piety and devotion, as well as for his profound knowledge of the Qur'ān, he shared with Abū Dharr Jundab ibn Junādat al-Ghifārī and Abū 'Abdi'llāh Ḥudhaifa ibn al-Yamān al-'Absī (may Allāh be well pleased with them) the special distinction of being called *ṣāḥib sirr an-Nabī*, because of the secret knowledge imparted to them by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He died in A.H. 32.

"'If someone has fasted for three days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits. As an extra reward, Allāh (Exalted is He) will say to him, at the moment when he breaks his fast *[ifṭār]*: "This servant of Mine must now receive his proper due. He is now entitled to My love *[maḥabba]* and My custodial friendship *[walāya]*. I hereby call upon you to bear witness, O My angels, to the fact that I have forgiven him all his sins, those he committed long ago as well as those he has committed recently."

"'If someone has fasted for four days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits. In addition, he will be granted the reward that is assigned to people of mature understanding who are truly repentant *[ulī 'l-albāb at-tauwābīn]*. When his record sheet is handed to him [at the Resurrection], he will be among the foremost of the triumphantly successful *[awā'il al-fā'izīn]*.

"'If someone has fasted for five days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits, but they will not be his only rewards. He will be brought forth from his grave on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]* with his face as brightly radiant as the moon on the night when it is full *[lailat al-badr]*. He will be credited with good deeds equal in number to the grains in a heaped-up pile of sand. He will be admitted into the Garden of Paradise, and he will be told: "You may ask Allāh for anything you wish [and He will grant your wish]."

"'If someone has fasted for six days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits. He will also be given a light that will illuminate the scene for the throng of people gathered at the Resurrection. He will be brought forth among those who are safe and secure *[āminīn]*, so that he can pass across the Narrow Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]* without being subjected to any reckoning. He will be pardoned even if he has been guilty of such serious offenses as the undutiful treatment of parents *['uqūq al-wālidain]*[24] and the rupture of family ties *[qaṭī'at ar-raḥim]*.[25] Allāh will smile upon him when he meets Him at the Resurrection.

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[24] See Vol. 2, p. 110.

[25] The bond of kinship is called *ṣilat ar-raḥim* (literally, the womb-connection). The word *raḥim* is derived from the same triconsonantal root as *raḥma* [mercy]. As Imām al-Ghazālī points out at the very beginning of the Book of Marriage (Book 12 of *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn*):

> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has attached great weight to ties of kinship and values them highly, for their sake He has declared fornication unlawful, going to great lengths to make it repugnant by sanction and deterrent, and has made the committing thereof a heinous sin and an odious offense. He invites and urges us to marry, by commendation and by command.

"'If someone has fasted for seven days, he will be entitled to receive all the benefits mentioned up to this point, except that not just one but all seven of the gates of Hell will be locked to make sure that he cannot enter the Fire. Allāh will actually declare the Fire of Hell to be strictly off-limits as far as he is concerned, and He will make it obligatory for him to dwell in the Garden of Paradise, in any part of which he may choose to settle down.

"'If someone has fasted for eight days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits. The eight gates of the Garden of Paradise will also be held open for him, so that he may enter therein by whichever gate he happens to prefer.

"'If someone has fasted for nine days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits. In addition, his record will be raised aloft in the uppermost heaven *['Illiyyūn]*.[26] When he is restored to life on the Day of Resurrection, he will be among those who are safe and secure *[āminīn]*. When he is brought forth from his grave, his face will be a brilliantly shining light. His radiance will illuminate the scene so brightly for the people in the assembled throng that they will say: "This must be a chosen Prophet *[nabī muṣṭafā]*!" He will be admitted to the Garden of Paradise without being subjected to any reckoning, but this will be the least significant of all the gifts granted to him!

"'If someone has fasted for ten days, he deserves the heartiest congratulations. Bravo, bravo *[fa-bakh fa-bakh]* to him! He will be entitled to all the benefits mentioned up to this point, but they will be multiplied tenfold. He will one of those whose bad deeds Allāh replaces with good deeds. He will be numbered among those who are drawn near to His presence, as staunch upholders of justice for the sake of Allāh *[qawwāmīna li'llāhi bi'l-qisṭ]*,[27] and he will be like someone who has worshipped Allāh faithfully for a thousand years, fasting, standing [to perform the *ṣalāt*-prayer], enduring with patience and reckoning only on His reward in the hereafter.

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[26] Q. 83:18-21.

[27] An allusion to the verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān in which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) tells the believers:

Be staunch upholders of justice, witnesses for Allāh. (4:135)	*kūnū qawwāmīna bi'l-qisṭi* *shuhadā'a li'llāhi*

creation, and harboring suspicions about Him in this regard, as well as doubting the fulfillment of His promise.

In listing these deadly vices we must also make mention of malicious spite [*ghill*], rancor [*ḥiqd*], envy [*ḥasad*], and cheating [*ghishsh*], along with the pursuit of high rank and status, the love of praise and approbation, the love of worldly prestige, being content with this world and feeling perfectly at home in it, overbearing pride and arrogance toward the servants of Allāh, and turning up one's nose in haughty disdain. As Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> And when he is told: "Be careful of your duty to Allāh," vainglory traps him in sin. (2:206)

The list continues with anger [*ghaḍab*], fanaticism [*ḥamiyya*], scornful contempt [*anafa*], the love of political power [*riyāsa*], animosity [*ʿadāwa*], hatred [*baghḍāʾ*], greedy ambition [*ṭamaʿ*], avarice [*bukhl*], tight-fistedness [*shuḥḥ*], covetousness [*raghba*], timidity [*rahba*], excessive hilarity [*faraḥ*], impertinence [*ashar*], cockiness [*baṭar*], aggrandizing the rich and belittling the poor, boastfulness [*fakhr*], conceitedness [*khuyalāʾ*], ruthless competition [*tanāfus*] and boastful rivalry [*mubāhāt*] in the advancement of your worldly interests, the pursuit of superficial notoriety [*riyāʾ*] and fame [*sumʿa*], disregarding the truth in order to give yourself an air of importance [*istikbār*], becoming engrossed in matters that are none of your business [*khawḍ fī mā lā yaʿnī*], indulging in a lot of talk [*kathrat al-kalām*] for no good purpose, bragging [*tīh*] and showing off [*ṣalaf*], prying [*ikhtibār*] into the affairs of other people (while neglecting your valid concerns and leaving your worship to chance), engaging in fawning [*tamalluq*] and trying to gain influence through flattery [*iqtidār*], treating the commandment of Allāh as something of little or no importance [*tahāwun*], treating mere creatures with veneration [*tawqīr*] and exaggerated respect [*mudāhana*], taking conceited pride [*ʿujb*] in your accomplishments, loving the praise you receive for things you have not done, preoccupation with the faults of your fellow creatures and blindness to your own shortcomings, forgetting the blessings of Allāh and attributing them to yourself (or to your fellow creatures, who are merely the instruments and tools for the delivery of those blessings), confining your attention to the outer form [*ẓāhir*] and making no effort to examine the basic roots [*uṣūl*], failing to observe the with them a rich assortment of the finest pearls and sapphires *[yāqūt]*, as well as a splendid array of exquisite ornaments and garments. They will say to him by way of greeting: "O saintly friend *[walī]* of Allāh, deliverance at last! Deliverance unto your Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), for Whose sake you went thirsty during your days [of fasting in the month of Rajab], and for Whose sake you let your body become emaciated!"

"'He will thus be one of the people who enjoy priority when it comes to entering the Gardens of Eden[40] *[Jannāt 'Adn]*, for he will be in the company of those who are triumphantly successful *[fā'izīn]* (may Allāh be well pleased with them, and may they be well pleased with Him). That is what is meant by the "Mighty Triumph *[al-Fawz al-'Aẓīm]*."'[41]

"After hearing all this, the man who had asked him about fasting in the month of Rajab came up with a theoretical question: 'Supposing that, on each of the days when a person is keeping the fast, the amount available to him for almsgiving *[ṣadaqa]* is barely sufficient to provide him with his basic sustenance, should he still give it away in the form of a charitable donation?' Abū 'd-Dardā' (may Allāh be well pleased with him) found the premise of this question so utterly absurd that he responded with the threefold retort: 'Preposterous, preposterous, preposterous *[haihāt haihāt haihāt]*!' Then he went on to say: 'Even if all the creatures in the universe were to pool their resources in an effort to match the reward received by that servant [of Allāh], they could not produce as much as one tenth of the reward that Allāh has bestowed upon that servant of His!'"

'Abdu'llāh ibn az-Zubair[42] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said: "If someone relieves a believer *[mu'min]* of an anxiety during the month of Rajab, which is also

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[40] That is to say, according to the Arabic lexicographers, "the Gardens of Perpetual Abode." (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *'–D–N.*)

[41] This expression occurs in numerous verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān. Particularly relevant in the present context are the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

He will forgive you your sins	*yaghfir la-kum dhunūba-kum*
and cause you to enter Gardens	*wa yudkhil-kum jannātin tajrī*
beneath which rivers flow,	*min taḥti-ha 'l-anhāru wa masākina*
and pleasant dwellings in Gardens	*ṭayyibatan fī jannāti 'Adn:*
of Eden. That is the Mighty Triumph.	*dhālika 'l-Fawzu 'l-'Aẓīm*
(61:12)	

[42] Az-Zubair ibn al-'Awwām (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was a cousin of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and one of the earliest believers. He died in A.H. 36.

More sayings on the subject of repentance *[tawba]*.

According to Abū Umāma al-Bāhilī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The guardian angel of the right-hand side *[ṣāḥib al-yamīn]* is in command of the guardian angel of the left-hand side *[ṣāḥib ash-shimāl]*, so if the servant [of Allāh] does a good deed, the guardian angel of the right side records ten good deeds in his credit column, and if he does a bad deed, the guardian angel of the left side is ready to record it in his debit column—but before he has time to do so, the guardian angel of the right side says: "Don't do that just yet!" He is then obliged to restrain himself for six or seven hours of the day.
>
> During that time the servant may beg forgiveness of Allāh (Exalted is He), in which case the angel will not record anything against him, or he may fail to beg forgiveness, in which case the angel will record one bad deed in his debit column.

Another version reads as follows:

> If the servant [of Allāh] commits a sin, it is not recorded against him unless and until he commits another sin. If the sins in his debit column add up to a total of five, and if he then does one good deed, five good deeds will be recorded in his favor, and those five will be set down opposite five bad deeds. At this point Iblīs (may Allāh curse him) will cry out in dismay: "How can I hope to get the better of the son of Adam? However hard I try, he renders all my effort null and void by means of a single good deed!"

According to a report transmitted by Yūnus [ibn 'Ubaidi'llāh], on the authority of al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> There is not one servant [of Allāh] who does not have two angels watching over him, and the guardian angel of the right-hand side *[ṣāḥib al-yamīn]* is in command of the guardian angel of the left-hand side *[ṣāḥib ash-shimāl]*.
>
> Whenever the servant does a bad deed, the guardian angel of the left side asks his commander: "Shall I write it down?" The guardian angel of the right side responds to this by telling him: "Leave it until he has committed five bad deeds." Then, when the servant has in fact committed five bad deeds, the guardian

then goes back and cancels the deal, so that the food reverts to the possession of the original owner. In a case like this, if *ḥalāl* could only mean lawful in essence or substance *[ḥalāl 'ain]*, it would no longer be permissible for the fastidiously pious believer *[al-mutawarri' al-mu'min]* to eat the meat concerned, because something has happened in the meantime to make eating it unlawful, namely, its temporary acquisition by the corrupt government official. In actual practice, however, the Muslims are unanimously agreed on the permissibility of eating this food, in spite of the fact that it came into the possession of the corrupt government official, who purchased it with his ill-gotten money, the spending of which is regarded as unlawful by all the Muslims.

It must therefore be understood that the terms *ḥalāl* [lawful] and *ḥarām* [unlawful] refer to the normal application of the sacred law *[shar']*, not to the intrinsic nature *[nafs al-'ain]* of the food, because the only food that is intrinsically lawful is the food of the Prophets *[anbiyā']*, as we learn from this tradition *[ḥadīth]*:

> The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once heard a man say: "O Allāh, grant me a means of subsistence that is absolutely lawful *[ḥalāl muṭlaq]*!"
>
> The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then told him: "That is the sustenance of the Prophets *[rizq al-anbiyā']*. You must ask Allāh to grant you a means of subsistence for which He will not punish you!"

Let us also consider how the sacred law *[shar']* applies to the situation of the non-Muslim communities within the Islāmic state *[ahl adh-dhimma]*,[253] the Jews *[Yahūd]*, Christians *[Naṣārā]* and Zoroastrians *[Majūs]*, who trade in forbidden commodities *[muḥarramāt]* such as wine and pigs.

In allowing them to sell these commodities, and then collecting the tithe *['ushr]* from the proceeds of their sales, we are acting in accordance with the instruction handed down from [the rightly guided Caliph] 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him), for it was he who said:

"Leave them in charge of the business of selling [commodities unlawful to Muslims], and collect the tithe *['ushr]* from the proceeds of namely, Rajab, while the other three occur in consecutive sequence [in the Islāmic calendar].[1]

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[253] The *ahl adh-dhimma* are the Jewish, Christian or Sabean subjects of an Islāmic state, who, in return for the payment of a special tax, are entitled under Islāmic law to security of their persons and their property.

In this context, the expression: "That is the right *dīn*" means: "...the right and proper computation *[hisāb]*."

As for the sentence: "So do not wrong yourselves in them," the meaning is: "...in the sacred months." Allāh (Exalted is He) has applied this prohibition to these four months specifically, in order to make us clearly understand that they deserve particular respect because of the magnitude of their holiness. In other words, it is in order to emphasize their special importance that He mentions them explicitly, rather than any of the other months, in connection with the prohibition of wrongdoing, although wrongdoing is actually forbidden during all the months of the year.

To clarify this point still further, let us consider a similar instance. Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Be careful to observe your prayers, and [especially] the middle prayer. (2:238)	*ḥāfiẓū ʿala 'ṣ-ṣalawāti wa 'ṣ-ṣalāti 'l-wusṭā.*

In this particular verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān, the emphasis is placed on the duty to observe the "middle" prayer, meaning the mid-afternoon prayer *[ʿaṣr]*. Although the commandment actually applies comprehensively to all observance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, the "middle" prayer has been singled out for special mention, in order to stress the importance of treating it with particular respect.[2]

The prohibition of wrongdoing *[ẓulm]* in the sacred months can be interpreted to mean: "During those months, you must not kill any of the Arabs who are guilty of polytheism *[mushrikī 'l-ʿArab]*, unless they take the initiative where killing is concerned."

Abū Yazīd [al-Bisṭāmī][3] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "Wrongdoing *[ẓulm]* means the renunciation of obedience

the heads from their spears and arrows. As a result, the clash of arms and the swishing noise of spears would not be heard for the duration of the month. A man might have gone out riding in search of his father's killer, but if he spotted him during Rajab he would not confront him. He would act as if he could neither see him nor hear him. This explains why it was called the 'Deaf' month."

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[1] Rajab is the seventh month of the Islāmic calendar, while Dhu 'l-Qaʿda, Dhu 'l-Ḥijja and Muḥarram are the eleventh, twelfth and first months, respectively.

[2] As ʿAbdullāh Yūsuf ʿAlī remarks, in a footnote to his translation of this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*: "This [mid-afternoon prayer] is apt to be most neglected, and yet this is the most necessary to remind us of God in the midst of our worldly affairs."

[3] Abū Yazīd Taifūr ibn ʿĪsā ibn Surūshān al-Bisṭāmī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), whose grandfather Surūshān was a Zoroastrian, was born in the district of Bisṭām in northeastern Persia, and it was there that he died in A.H. 261 or 264/874 or 877 C.E. His mausoleum still stands as a place of pious visitation. He is famous for the boldness of his utterances, and is regarded as the founder of the ecstatic or "drunken" school of Islāmic mysticism (as opposed to the "sober" school founded by al-Junaid).

Some say that it came to be called 'Deaf' because it was never possible to hear the wrath of Allāh (Exalted is He) being vented against any group of people during this month. This was because Allāh (Exalted is He) had chastised the nations of yore during the other months, but He had never punished any community *[umma]* during this month. It was in this month, they say, that Allāh put Noah *[Nūḥ]* aboard the ark *[safīna]*, in which he and those who accompanied him were to spend the next six months.

According to one report, it was Ibrāhīm an-Nakhaʿī who said: "Rajab is the month of Allāh (Exalted is He). It was in this month that Allāh put Noah aboard the ark. Noah (peace be upon him) then spent the month fasting aboard the ark, and he ordered those who accompanied him to keep the same fast, so Allāh (Exalted is He) kept him and those who were with him safe from the flood *[ṭūfān]*, while He purified the earth by ridding it of idolatrous polytheism *[shirk]* and aggressive behavior *[ʿudwān]*."

According to some other traditional authorities, a version of this saying can be traced all the way back to the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace). One such report is that of Hibatu'llāh, who informs us, on the strength of a chain of transmission *[isnād]* via Abū Ḥāzim from Sahl ibn Saʿd (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> There can be no doubt that Rajab is one of the sacred months. It was in this month that Allāh put Noah aboard the ark. Noah (peace be upon him) then spent the month fasting aboard the ark, and he ordered those who accompanied him to keep the same fast, so Allāh (Exalted is He) delivered them and kept them safe from drowning, while Allāh used the flood *[ṭūfān]* to purify the earth by ridding it of unbelief *[kufr]* and tyranny *[ṭughyān]*.

Someone said: "It is called 'Deaf' because it is deaf to your crude and erroneous behavior, although it is a receptive listener to your meritorious and honorable conduct, O believer *[yā mu'min]*! Allāh (Exalted is He)

Concerning the special merit of fasting on the first day of Rajab, and of keeping vigil throughout the first night of that month.

Whenever the month of Rajab came around, as Shaikh Imām Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has informed us on good traditional authority,[43] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to say:

> O Allāh, bestow Your blessed grace upon us in Rajab and Sha'bān, and allow us to live on into Ramadān!

As Shaikh Imām Hibatu'llāh (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has also informed us,[44] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If someone has fasted on the first day of Rajab, his fast will be counted as the equivalent of a month-long fast.
>
> If someone has fasted for seven days in Rajab, the seven gates of Hell *[Jahannam]* will all be locked to keep him shut out.
>
> If someone has fasted for eight days in Rajab, the eight gates of the Garden of Paradise will all be held open for him.
>
> If someone has fasted for ten days in Rajab, Allāh will replace his bad deeds with good deeds.
>
> If someone has fasted for eighteen days in Rajab, a crier will call out from heaven above: "Allāh has already forgiven you, so make a fresh start and do good work!"

Shaikh Imām Hibatu'llāh (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him)

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[43] **Author's note:** The chain of transmission *[isnād]* cited by Shaikh Imām Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) goes back to Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who first reported this saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[44] **Author's note:** In this case, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* cited by Shaikh Imām Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is as follows: **Maimūn ibn Mihrān—Abū Dharr** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Invocation. A series of invocations, by which the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) seeks refuge with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) from the Devil and from a wide range of specific evils and temptations, 42–43. A series of invocations, each beginning with: "In the Name of Allāh, who... *[Bismi'llāhi 'lladhī...]*," 95–96. Benefits obtained by those who invoke the Divine Mercy by saying: "In the Name of Allāh *[Bismi'llāh]*," 103. See Spiritual development

Khawāṭir. See Notions

Lummatān. See Tremors

Mujāhada. See Struggle

Name. Special merit of "In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate *[Bismi'llāhi'r-Rahmāni'r-Rahīm]*," 72–80. See Allāh; Blessing; Forgiveness; Interpretation; Invocation; Solomon; Spiritual development

Notions. The six 'notions' *[khawāṭir]* that may arise within the human heart, 32–35. Passages from other works by Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), in which further light is shed on the subject of 'notions' *[khawāṭir]*, 36–40

Pious restraint. The pious restraint *[wara']* which must be observed by the penitent in every aspect of his future conduct, 161–176. Finer points of pious restraint *[wara']*, as illustrated by stories told about the Prophets, the saints and the righteous, 177–79. Ten obligations that must be discharged before pious restraint *[wara']* can acquire its full significance, 180–81

Rahīm. See Name

Rahmān. See Name

Refuge. Concerning the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He): When you recite the Qur'ān, seek refuge with Allāh from Satan the accursed *[fa-idhā qara'ta'l-qur'āna fa-'sta'idh bi'llāhi mina'sh-shaiṭāni'r-rajīm]*, 5–45. Meaning of the expression "I take refuge" *[a'ūdhu]*, 10–13. Five benefits that accrue to the servant of Allāh from seeking refuge *[isti'ādha]* with Him, 17–18. See Invocation

Repentance. Concerning the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He): "And repent unto Allāh all together, O believers, for then you may be able to succeed *[wa tūbū ila'llāhi jamī'an ayyuha'l-mu'minūna la'allakum tufliḥūn]*," 105–208. Preconditions of repentance *[tauba]* and how it must be carried out, 129–58. Permissibility of repenting some sins but not others, 182–86. Traditional narratives, reports and sayings on the subject of repentance *[tauba]*, 187–200, 204-8. Four sets of four: (a) four signs that point to repentance *[tauba]*, (b) four signs that point to the acceptance of repentance, (c) four obligations owed to the penitent by other people, (d) four noble honors conferred on the penitent by Allāh (Exalted is He), 201–3. See Shaikhs

Right. See Allāh; Human

Salvation. Views expressed by the Shaikhs on the subject of salvation *[najāt]*, 225–27

Satan. Remoteness of Satan from Allāh and from all that is good, 14–16. Things which Satan dreads, and against which he is on his guard, 19–20. Sons of Satan who oversee the sons of Adam, 24–29. See Devil; Struggle

Satanic Verses. Concerning the episode of the original "Satanic Verses": The full account provided in the *Sīra* [Biography] of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as reported by the celebrated historian, Imām Abū Ja'far Muhammad ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī, 305–9

are as follows: (1) The first night of Rajab; one must keep vigil throughout that night, and then fast during the following daytime.[50] (2 and 3) The two nights of the two Festivals *[lailatai 'l-'Īdain]*;[51] one must keep vigil throughout each of those two nights, and break fast during the following daylight hours. (4) The night of the middle of Sha'bān; one must keep vigil throughout that night, and then fast during the following daytime. (5) The night of 'Āshūrā';[52] one must keep vigil throughout that night, and then fast during the following daytime.

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[50] It should be remembered that the Islamic day (in the sense of a 24-hour period) begins at sunset.

[51] That is to say, the night of the Festival of Fastbreaking *['Īdu 'l-Fiṭr]* at the end of Ramaḍān, and the night of the Festival of Sacrifices *['Īdu 'l-Aḍḥā]* in Dhu' l-Ḥijja, the month of Pilgrimage.

[52] See pp. 278–94 below.

Concerning the fourteen nights of the year when keeping vigil is particularly commendable, and the seventeen days on which it is particularly commendable to devote oneself assiduously to worshipful service *[ʿibāda]*.

One of the learned scholars *[ʿulamāʾ]* (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has compiled a list of the nights on which it is particularly commendable *[yustaḥabb]* to keep vigil.[53] These nights are fourteen in number, namely:

1. The first night of the month of Muḥarram.
2. The night of ʿĀshūrāʾ [the tenth of Muḥarram].
3. The first night of the month of Rajab.
4. The night that comes in the middle of Rajab.
5. The night of the twenty-seventh of Rajab.
6. The night that comes in the middle of Shaʿbān.
7. The night of ʿArafa [the ninth of Dhu ʾl-Ḥijja, the month of Pilgrimage].

8-9. The nights of the two Festivals.[54]

10-14. The five nights that occur on the odd-numbered dates during the last ten days of Ramaḍān.[55]

There are likewise certain days during which it is particularly commendable to practice the recitation of litanies *[aurād]*[56] and to concentrate

the heads from their spears and arrows. As a result, the clash of arms and the swishing noise of spears would not be heard for the duration of the month. A man might have gone out riding in search of his father's killer, but if he spotted him during Rajab he would not confront him. He would act as if he could neither see him nor hear him. This explains why it was called the 'Deaf' month."

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[53] In non-religious contexts, the Arabic expression *iḥyāʾ al-lail* (literally, enlivening the night, or bringing the night to life) means simply "to stay awake throughout the night." In a religious context, it refers to the practice of keeping vigil in order to enliven the night with religious service, worship, adoration and devotion.

[54] See note 51 on p. 29 above.

[55] In other words, the nights of the 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th and 29th of Ramaḍān.

[56] Etymologically, the term *wird* [plural: *aurād*] means "to go down to a watering-place." In the context of Islāmic worship, it refers to a definite time of day or night devoted to private prayer (over and above the five daily prayers at their prescribed times), as well as to the 'litany' recited on this occasion. In its simplest form, the *wird* consists of four cycles *[rakaʿāt]* of prayer, with the recitation of one seventh of the Qurʾān.

Some say that it came to be called 'Deaf' because it was never possible to hear the wrath of Allāh (Exalted is He) being vented against any group of people during this month. This was because Allāh (Exalted is He) had chastised the nations of yore during the other months, but He had never punished any community *[umma]* during this month. It was in this month, they say, that Allāh put Noah *[Nūḥ]* aboard the ark *[safīna]*, in which he and those who accompanied him were to spend the next six months.

According to one report, it was Ibrāhīm an-Nakha'ī who said: "Rajab is the month of Allāh (Exalted is He). It was in this month that Allāh put Noah aboard the ark. Noah (peace be upon him) then spent the month fasting aboard the ark, and he ordered those who accompanied him to keep the same fast, so Allāh (Exalted is He) kept him and those who were with him safe from the flood *[ṭūfān]*, while He purified the earth by ridding it of idolatrous polytheism *[shirk]* and aggressive behavior *['udwān]*."

According to some other traditional authorities, a version of this saying can be traced all the way back to the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace). One such report is that of Hibatu'llāh, who informs us, on the strength of a chain of transmission *[isnād]* via Abū Ḥāzim from Sahl ibn Sa'd (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

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Someone said: "It is called 'Deaf' because it is deaf to your crude and erroneous behavior, although it is a receptive listener to your meritorious and honorable conduct, O believer *[yā mu'min]*! Allāh (Exalted is He) so that he will enter the Garden of Paradise together with them, and he will be regarded as one of their close companions.

"'If someone has fasted for three days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits. As an extra reward, Allāh (Exalted is He) will say to him, at the moment when he breaks his fast *[ifṭār]*: "This servant of Mine must now receive his proper due. He is now entitled to My love *[maḥabba]* and My custodial friendship *[walāya]*. I hereby call upon you to bear witness, O My angels, to the fact that I have forgiven him all his sins, those he committed long ago as well as those he has committed recently."

"'If someone has fasted for four days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits. In addition, he will be granted the reward that is assigned to people of mature understanding who are truly repentant *[ulī 'l-albāb at-tawwābīn]*. When his record sheet is handed to him [at the Resurrection], he will be among the foremost of the triumphantly successful *[awā'il al-fā'izīn]*.

"'If someone has fasted for five days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits, but they will not be his only rewards. He will be brought forth from his grave on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]* with his face as brightly radiant as the moon on the night when it is full *[lailat al-badr]*. He will be credited with good deeds equal in number to the grains in a heaped-up pile of sand. He will be admitted into the Garden of Paradise, and he will be told: "You may ask Allāh for anything you wish [and He will grant your wish]."

"'If someone has fasted for six days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits. He will also be given a light that will illuminate the scene for the throng of people gathered at the Resurrection. He will be brought forth among those who are safe and secure *[āminīn]*, so that he can pass across the Narrow Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]* without being subjected to any reckoning. He will be pardoned even if he has been guilty of such serious offenses as the undutiful treatment of parents *['uqūq al-wālidain]*[24] and the rupture of family ties *[qaṭī'at ar-raḥim]*.[25] Allāh will smile upon him when he meets Him at the Resurrection.

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[24] See Vol. 2, p. 110.

[25] The bond of kinship is called *ṣilat ar-raḥim* (literally, the womb-connection). The word *raḥim* is derived from the same triconsonantal root as *raḥma* [mercy]. As Imām al-Ghazālī points out at the very beginning of the Book of Marriage (Book 12 of *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn*):

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has attached great weight to ties of kinship and values them highly, for their sake He has declared fornication unlawful, going to great lengths to make it repugnant by sanction and deterrent, and has made the committing thereof a heinous sin and an odious offense. He invites and urges us to marry, by commendation and by command.

More sayings on the subject of repentance *[tawba]*.

According to Abū Umāma al-Bāhilī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The guardian angel of the right-hand side *[ṣāḥib al-yamīn]* is in command of the guardian angel of the left-hand side *[ṣāḥib ash-shimāl]*, so if the servant [of Allāh] does a good deed, the guardian angel of the right side records ten good deeds in his credit column, and if he does a bad deed, the guardian angel of the left side is ready to record it in his debit column—but before he has time to do so, the guardian angel of the right side says: "Don't do that just yet!" He is then obliged to restrain himself for six or seven hours of the day.
>
> During that time the servant may beg forgiveness of Allāh (Exalted is He), in which case the angel will not record anything against him, or he may fail to beg forgiveness, in which case the angel will record one bad deed in his debit column.

Another version reads as follows:

> If the servant [of Allāh] commits a sin, it is not recorded against him unless and until he commits another sin. If the sins in his debit column add up to a total of five, and if he then does one good deed, five good deeds will be recorded in his favor, and those five will be set down opposite five bad deeds. At this point Iblīs (may Allāh curse him) will cry out in dismay: "How can I hope to get the better of the son of Adam? However hard I try, he renders all my effort null and void by means of a single good deed!"

According to a report transmitted by Yūnus [ibn 'Ubaidi'llāh], on the authority of al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> There is not one servant [of Allāh] who does not have two angels watching over him, and the guardian angel of the right-hand side *[ṣāḥib al-yamīn]* is in command of the guardian angel of the left-hand side *[ṣāḥib ash-shimāl]*.
>
> Whenever the servant does a bad deed, the guardian angel of the left side asks his commander: "Shall I write it down?" The guardian angel of the right side responds to this by telling him: "Leave it until he has committed five bad deeds." Then, when the servant has in fact committed five bad deeds, the guardian

Some traditional reports concerning the special blessings bestowed by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) upon those who perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* during the month of Rajab.

It was just after the new moon had appeared to mark the beginning of Rajab, as Shaikh Imām Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has informed us on good traditional authority,[62] that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) turned to Salmān al-Fārisī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) and said:

> O Salmān, Allāh will surely erase all the sins from the record of any believing man *[mu'min]*, and of any believing woman *[mu'mina]*, who performs thirty cycles of ritual prayer *[yuṣallī thalāthīna rak'a]* in the course of this month, reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* and the Sūra that begins with "Say: 'He is Allāh, One...'"[63] three times, and the Sūra that begins with "Say: 'O unbelievers...'"[64] three times. That man or woman will be granted the same reward as a person who has fasted throughout the entire month. He or she will be treated as one of those who continue to perform the ritual prayer *[al-muṣallīn]* right through to the following year, and will be credited every day with a deed as noble as that of one of the martyrs of the battle of Badr *[shahīd min shuhadā'i Badr]*.
>
> For every day of fasting [in Rajab], the worship of an entire year will be recorded in favor of the believer concerned, whose credit will be enhanced by a thousand degrees. If the believer keeps the fast throughout the whole of this month, as well as performing this particular ṣalāt-prayer [i.e., the aforementioned thirty cycles of ritual prayer], Allāh will deliver that man or woman from the Fire of

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[62] **Author's note:** Shaikh Imām Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Muhāmilī—'Alī ibn Muhammad ibn Ismā'īl ibn Muhammad al-Ṣaffār** [the Brass Founder]—**Sa'īd ibn Naṣr ibn al-Manṣūr al-Bazzār** [the Seedsman]—**Sufyān ibn 'Uyaina—al-A'mash—Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb—Salmān al-Fārisī** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[63] Sūra 112.

[64] Sūra 109.

Hell and declare that he or she is entitled to enter the Garden of Paradise, therein to dwell in the vicinity of Allāh (Glory be to Him).

Gabriel (peace be upon him) informed me of this, and then he went on to say: "O Muhammad, this a clear sign to mark the distinction between you true believers, on the one hand, and the polytheists *[mushrikīn]* and hypocrites *[munāfiqūn]* on the other, because the hypocrites do not perform that ritual prayer *[lā yuṣallūna dhālik]*."

Having heard these words addressed to him by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), Salmān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) responded by saying: "O Messenger, tell me exactly how I must perform that particular *ṣalāt*-prayer, and exactly when I must perform it."

"O Salmān," said Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "on the first day of the month you must perform ten cycles of the *ṣalāt*-prayer. In each cycle *[rak'a]* you must recite the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* one time only, then the Sūra that begins with 'Say: "He is Allāh, One..."' three times, and then the Sūra that begins with 'Say: "O unbelievers ..."' three times. When you have pronounced the final salutation *[sallamta]*,[65] you must raise your hands and say:

There is no god except Allāh, Alone.	*Lā ilāha illa 'llāhu Waḥdah*
No partner has He.	*lā sharīka lah*
To Him belongs the kingdom	*lahu 'l-mulku*
and to Him belongs the praise.	*wa lahu 'l-ḥamd*
He brings to life and causes death,	*yuḥyī wa yumītu*
while He is Ever-Living and never dies.	*wa Huwa Ḥayyun lā yamūt.*
All goodness is in His Hand,	*bi-yadihi 'l-khairu*
and He is Powerful over all things.	*wa Huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*

O Allāh, no one can withhold	*Allāhumma lā māni'a*
what You have given, and no one	*li-mā a'ṭaita*
can give what You have withheld,	*wa lā mu'ṭiya*
nor will the worldly fortune of the	*li-mā mana'ta*
possessor of such fortune profit him,	*wa lā yanfa'u*
if he does not obtain the fortune	*dha 'l-jaddi*
that comes from You [in the hereafter].	*minka 'l-jadd*

"Then you must rub your face with your hands, for at this point you will have completed the first set of ten cycles.

"In the middle of the month you must perform another ten cycles of the *ṣalāt*-prayer. In each cycle *[rak'a]* you must again recite the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* one time only, then the Sūra that begins with 'Say: "He is Allāh, One..."' three times, and then the Sūra that begins with 'Say: "O unbelievers..."' three times. When you have pronounced the final salutation *[sallamta]*,[66] you must raise your hands as you did before, but this time you must say:

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[65] That is to say: "When you have turned your head to the right, saying: 'Peace be upon you... *[as-salāmu 'alaikum]*...', and then likewise to the left...."

[66] See note 65 above.

There is no god except Allāh, Alone.	*Lā ilāha illa 'llāhu Waḥdah*
No partner has He.	*lā sharīka lah*
To Him belongs the kingdom	*lahu 'l-mulku*
and to Him belongs the praise.	*wa lahu 'l-ḥamd*
He brings to life and causes death,	*yuḥyī wa yumītu*
while He is Ever-Living and never dies.	*wa Huwa Ḥayyun lā yamūt.*
All goodness is in His Hand,	*bi-yadihi 'l-khairu*
and He is Powerful over all things.	*wa Huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr*
(I worship Him) as God, Single, One,	*Ilāhan Wāḥidan Aḥadan*
Everlasting, Alone, Unique.	*Ṣamadan Fardan Witrā*
He takes unto Himself	*lā yattakhidhu ṣāḥibatan*
neither female consort nor son.	*wa lā waladā*

"Then you must rub your face with your hands, for at this point you will have completed the second set of ten cycles.

"At the end of the month you must perform the third and final set of ten cycles of *ṣalāt*-prayer, and in each cycle *[rak'a]* you must again recite the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* one time only, then the Sūra that begins with 'Say: "He is Allāh, One…"' three times, and then the Sūra that begins with 'Say: "O unbelievers…"' three times. When you have pronounced the final salutation *[sallamta]*, you must raise your hands as before, but this time you must say:

There is no god except Allāh, Alone.	*Lā ilāha illa 'llāhu Waḥdah*
No partner has He.	*lā sharīka lah*
To Him belongs the kingdom	*lahu 'l-mulku*
and to Him belongs the praise.	*wa lahu 'l-ḥamd*
He brings to life and causes death,	*yuḥyī wa yumītu*
while He is Ever-Living and never dies.	*wa Huwa Ḥayyun lā yamūt.*
All goodness is in His Hand,	*bi-yadihi 'l-khairu*
and He is Powerful over all things.	*wa Huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*
May Allāh bless our Master Muhammad	*ṣalla 'llāhu 'alā Sayyidinā*
and the pure members of his family.	*Muḥammadin wa 'alā ālihi 'ṭ-ṭāhirīn*
There is neither any power	*lā ḥawla*
nor any strength except with Allāh,	*wa lā quwwata*
the Most High, the Almighty.	*illā bi'llāhi 'l-'Aliyyi 'l-'Aẓīm.*

"You should then ask for whatever you need, whereupon He will surely give a positive response to your prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*. Allāh will interpose seventy ditches between you and Hell *[Jahannam]*, and each of those ditches will be as wide as the distance that separates this earth from heaven above. For every cycle of *ṣalāt*-prayer you have performed, He will credit you with a million cycles *[alf alf rak'a]*. He will also inscribe on your record an exemption from the Fire of Hell and a permit to cross the Narrow Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]*."

Salmān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "As soon as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had finished speaking, I sank to the ground in humble prostration, weeping as I sought to express my gratitude to Allāh (Exalted is He) for what I had just been privileged to hear."[67]

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[67] **Author's note:** More on this subject may be found in the Book of Traditional Practice *[Kitāb al-'Amal bi's-Sunna]*. Allāh knows best *[wa 'llāhu A'lam]*.

Traditional reports in which great emphasis is placed on the special merit of fasting on the first Thursday in Rajab, and of performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* during the first Friday night of that month.

The following report has been conveyed to us by Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt ['Father of Blessings'] Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who cites good traditional authority in support of its authenticity:[68]

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Rajab is Allāh's month, Shaʿbān is my month, and Ramadān is the month of my Community *[Ummat]*.

Someone then asked him: "O Messenger of Allāh, what do you mean exactly, when you say that Rajab is Allāh's month?" So he explained (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> [I call it Allāh's month] because it is specifically associated with forgiveness, because in it the shedding of blood is brought to a halt, because in it Allāh (Exalted is He) relents toward His Prophets *[anbiyāʾ]*, because in it He rescues His saints *[auliyāʾ]* from the hands of their enemies, and because anyone who fasts during this month becomes entitled to receive three things from Allāh (Exalted is He). The first and second of these are forgiveness for all the sins he has previously committed, and impregnable virtue *[ʿisma]* for the remainder of his life. As for the third, he will be safe from thirst on the Day of the Greatest Review *[Yaum al-ʿArḍ al-Akbar]*

At this point a feeble old man stood up and said: "O Messenger of Allāh, I am physically incapable of fasting through the whole of the month," so Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) went on to say:

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[68] ***Author's note:*** Shaikh Imām Abu 'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **al-Qāḍī [the Judge] Abu 'l-Faḍl Jaʿfar ibn Yaḥyā ibn al-Kamāl al-Makkī** (who stated that he was in the Sacred Mosque in Mecca when the report was communicated to him)—**Abū ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Jazarī —Abu 'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn Jahdam al-Hamadānī—Abu 'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn Saʿīd as-Saʿdī al-Baṣrī—his father—Khalaf ibn ʿAbdi'llāh as-Ṣaghānī—Ḥamīd aṭ-Ṭawīl [the Tall]—Anas ibn Mālik** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

> Fast during the first day of the month and during the day that comes in the middle of it, and also during the very last day of the month, for then you will be given the same reward as someone who has fasted through the whole of the month, since one good deed is equal in value to ten of the same kind.
>
> It is most important, however, that none of you should neglect the first Friday night in Rajab,[69] for it is the night that the angels call the Night of [the Granting of] Wishes *[Lailat ar-Ragha'ib]*. This is because, by the time the first third of the night has elapsed, there will not be a single angel still at large in the heavens, nor in any region of the earth bar one. They will all be gathered together in the Ka'ba and the area immediately surrounding it. Allāh (Exalted is He) will condescend to notice that they have assembled there, and He will say: "My angels, ask Me for whatever you wish!" Their response to this will be: "Our Lord, the request we wish to make is that You grant forgiveness to those who faithfully keep the fast in Rajab," whereupon Allāh (Exalted is He) will tell them: "That I have already done!"

Then Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> No one will go unrewarded if he fasts during the daytime on Thursday, the first Thursday in Rajab, and if he then performs twelve extra cycles of *salāt*-prayer during the period between sunset *[maghrib]* and late evening *['ishā']*, i.e., during the first segment *['atama]* of the night of Friday. In each cycle *[rak'a]* he must recite the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātihat al-Kitāb]* one time only, then the Sūra that begins with "Behold, We sent it down on the Night of Power..."[70] three times, and the Sūra that begins with "Say: 'He is Allāh, One...'"[71] twelve times. The twelve cycles must be divided into sets of two, with a salutation *[taslīma]*[72] to mark the conclusion of each pair.
>
> When he has completed his *salāt*-prayer, he must invoke blessings upon me, by repeating seventy times:

O Allāh, bestow blessings and	*Allāhumma salli 'alā*
peace upon Muhammad,	*Muhammadini*
the Gentile Prophet,	*'n-Nabiyyi 'l-Ummiyyi*
and upon his family.	*wa 'alā ālihi wa sallim.*

> He must then bow down low in an act of prostration *[sajda]*, repeating seventy times while he is in the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*:

All-Glorious, All-Holy,	*Subbūhun Quddūsun*
Lord of the Angels and of the Spirit!	*Rabbu 'l-Malā'ikati wa 'r-Rūh.*

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[69] Please remember that Friday night in the Islāmic calendar is the night that begins at sunset on Thursday!

[70] Sūra 97.

[71] Sūra 112.

[72] See note 65 on p. 35 above.

Concerning the fourteen nights of the year when keeping vigil is particularly commendable, and the seventeen days on which it is particularly commendable to devote oneself assiduously to worshipful service [*ʿibāda*].

One of the learned scholars [*ʿulamāʾ*] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has compiled a list of the nights on which it is particularly commendable [*yustaḥabb*] to keep vigil.[53] These nights are fourteen in number, namely:

1. The first night of the month of Muharram.
2. The night of ʿĀshūrāʾ [the tenth of Muḥarram].
3. The first night of the month of Rajab.
4. The night that comes in the middle of Rajab.
5. The night of the twenty-seventh of Rajab.
6. The night that comes in the middle of Shaʿbān.
7. The night of ʿArafa [the ninth of Dhu ʾl-Ḥijja, the month of Pilgrimage].

8-9. The nights of the two Festivals.[54]

10-14. The five nights that occur on the odd-numbered dates during the last ten days of Ramadān.[55]

There are likewise certain days during which it is particularly commendable to practice the recitation of litanies [*aurād*][56] and to concentrate

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[53] In non-religious contexts, the Arabic expression *iḥyāʾ al-lail* (literally, enlivening the night, or bringing the night to life) means simply "to stay awake throughout the night." In a religious context, it refers to the practice of keeping vigil in order to enliven the night with religious service, worship, adoration and devotion.

[54] See note 51 on p. 29 above.

[55] In other words, the nights of the 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th and 29th of Ramadān.

[56] Etymologically, the term *wird* [plural: *aurād*] means "to go down to a watering-place." In the context of Islamic worship, it refers to a definite time of day or night devoted to private prayer (over and above the five daily prayers at their prescribed times), as well as to the 'litany' recited on this occasion. In its simplest form, the *wird* consists of four cycles [*rakaʿāt*] of prayer, with the recitation of one seventh of the Qurʾān.

Concerning the special merit of fasting during the twenty-seventh day of Rajab.

According to yet another report conveyed to us by Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt ['Father of Blessings'] Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who cites good traditional authority in support of its authenticity,[73] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone keeps the fast on the twenty-seventh day of Rajab, he will be credited with the same reward as that which is earned by fasting for sixty months.

It was on the twenty-seventh day of Rajab, we are told, that Gabriel first came down to invest the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) with his Messengership *[Risāla]*.

Shaikh Hibatu'llāh has also provided us with the following report, together with its chain of transmission *[isnād]* from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī[74] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who said:

"Whenever the twenty-seventh of Rajab came around, 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Abbas (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) would start the day as a *mu'takif* [i.e., as someone who follows the practice called *i'tikāf*, meaning withdrawal into a state of seclusion in order to concentrate on religious devotions, especially while fasting]. He would devote the whole morning to prayer, up to and including the obligatory ritual prayer at noon *[zuhr]*. After performing the noon prayer, he would stroll about for a little while to stretch his legs, then he would perform an extra *ṣalāt*-prayer consisting of four cycles. In each cycle *[rak'a]* he would recite 'Praise be to Allāh ...'[75] one time only, then the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge *[al-Mu'awwidhatān]*,[76] also one time only, then the Sūra that begins with 'Behold, We sent it down on the Night of Power...'[77] three times, and the Sūra that begins with 'Say: "He is Allāh, One..."'[78] fifty times. He would then devote himself to continuous supplication *[du'ā']*, until it was time to perform the obligatory late-afternoon ritual prayer *[ṣalāt al-'aṣr]*. 'This,' he used to say, 'is exactly what Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) always did on this particular day.'"

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[73] **Author's note**: Shaikh Imām Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **ash-Shaikh al-Hāfiz Abū Bakr Ahmad ibn 'Alī Thābit ibn al-Khatīb—'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Alī ibn Muhammad Bashīr—'Alī ibn 'Umar al-Hāfiz** [who knew the Qur'ān by heart]**—Abū Bakr Nasr ibn Jaishūn ibn Mūsā 'l-Khallāl** [the Vinegar Merchant]**—'Alī ibn Sa'īd ad-Dailamī—Damrat ibn Rabī'at al Qurashī—Ibn Shawdhab—Matir al-Warrāq** [the Papermaker, or the Copier of Manuscripts]**—Shahr ibn Hawshab—Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)**—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).**

[74] Al-Hasan ibn Abi'l-Hasan al-Basrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is revered as one of the greatest saints of early Islām. Born in Medina in A.H. 21/642 C.E., he was brought up in Basra, where he met many Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace.) He died in A.H. 110/728 C.E.

According to this next report, likewise conveyed to us by Shaikh Hibatu'llāh,[79] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Rajab contains a very special day and a very special night. If someone fasts during that day, and keeps vigil throughout that night, he will be entitled to a reward like the one that would be earned by a person who fasted for a hundred years, and who kept vigil throughout all the nights in that period.

The reference must be to the twenty-seventh of Rajab, that being the day on which our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was first dispatched *[bu'itha]* to embark upon his mission.

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[75] In other words, the Opening Sūra of the Qur'ān *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]*, which begins with "*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*... [Praise be to Allāh ...]" (after the *Basmala*, the invocation of Allāh's Name).

[76] Sūra 113 ('The Daybreak' *[al-Falaq]*) and Sūra 114 ('Mankind' *[an-Nās]*), the last two Sūras in the Qur'ān, are known as *al-Mu'awwidhatān* [the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge]. They read:

Say: "I take refuge	*qul a'ūdhu*
with the Lord of the Daybreak	*bi-Rabbi 'l-falaq*
from the evil of what He has created	*min sharri mā khalaq*
from the evil of the darkness	*wa min sharri ghāsiqin*
when it is intense	*idhā waqab*
from the evil of the witches	*wa min sharri 'n-naffāthāti*
who blow on knots	*fi 'l-'uqad:*
and from the evil of the envier	*wa min sharri ḥāsidin*
when he envies." (113:1–5)	*idhā ḥasad.*
Say: "I take refuge with the Lord of mankind	*qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'n-nās*
the King of mankind	*Maliki 'n-nās:*
the God of mankind	*Ilāhi 'n-nās*
from the evil of the slinking whisperer	*min sharri 'l-waswāsi 'l-khannās*
who whispers in the breasts of mankind	*alladhī yuwaswisu fī ṣudūri 'n-nās*
of the jinn and of mankind." (114:1–6)	*mina 'l-jinnati wa 'n-nās.*

[77] Sūra 97.

[78] Sūra 112.

[79] **Author's note**: Shaikh Imām Abu 'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **Abū Salama—Abū Huraira and Salmān al-Fārisī** (may Allāh be well pleased with them both)**—the Prophet** (**Allāh bless him and give him peace**).

month," so Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) went on to say:

> Fast during the first day of the month and during the day that comes in the middle of it, and also during the very last day of the month, for then you will be given the same reward as someone who has fasted through the whole of the month, since one good deed is equal in value to ten of the same kind.
>
> It is most important, however, that none of you should neglect the first Friday night in Rajab,[69] for it is the night that the angels call the Night of [the Granting of] Wishes *[Lailat ar-Raghā'ib]*. This is because, by the time the first third of the night has elapsed, there will not be a single angel still at large in the heavens, nor in any region of the earth but one. They will all be gathered together in the Ka'ba and the area immediately surrounding it. Allāh (Exalted is He) will condescend to notice that they have assembled there, and He will say: "My angels, ask Me for whatever you wish!" Their response to this will be: "Our Lord, the request we wish to make is that You grant forgiveness to those who faithfully keep the fast in Rajab," whereupon Allāh (Exalted is He) will tell them: "That I have already done!"

Then Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> No one will go unrewarded if he fasts during the daytime on Thursday, the first Thursday in Rajab, and if he then performs twelve extra cycles of *ṣalāt*-prayer during the period between sunset *[maghrib]* and late evening *['ishā']*, i.e., during the first segment *['atama]* of the night of Friday. In each cycle *[rak'a]* he must recite the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātihat al-Kitāb]* one time only, then the Sūra that begins with "Behold, We sent it down on the Night of Power…"[70] three times, and the Sūra that begins with "Say: 'He is Allāh, One…'"[71] twelve times. The twelve cycles must be divided into sets of two, with a salutation *[taslīma]*[72] to mark the conclusion of each pair.
>
> When he has completed his *ṣalāt*-prayer, he must invoke blessings upon me, by repeating seventy times:

O Allāh, bestow blessings and	*Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā*
peace upon Muhammad,	*Muhammadini*
the Gentile Prophet,	*'n-Nabiyyi 'l-Ummiyyi*
and upon his family.	*wa 'alā ālihi wa sallim.*

> He must then bow down low in an act of prostration *[sajda]*, repeating seventy times while he is in the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*:

All-Glorious, All-Holy,	*Subbūhun Quddūsun*
Lord of the Angels and of the Spirit!	*Rabbu 'l-Malā'ikati wa 'r-Rūh.*

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[69] Please remember that Friday night in the Islāmic calendar is the night that begins at sunset on Thursday!

[70] Sūra 97.

[71] Sūra 112.

[72] See note 65 on p. 35 above.

> shackles on his neck and iron fetters on his legs—and if his fellow creatures were then to catch sight of him, they would certainly flee from him and run as far away from him as they possibly could.

The traditional report continues:

> Due to the intensity of the heat of the Fire of Hell, its grievous affliction, the varied range of its torment, and the narrowness of its dwelling places, the fleshy parts of its inhabitants will turn green, their bones will split and crack, their brains will boil and pour down over their outer layers of skin. As their skin is burned away, their limbs will be cut off at the joints. Then, as the pus oozes out from their dismembered limbs, their bodies will come to be riddled with maggots and worms. Those maggots and worms will soon grow so fat that they come to resemble the wild ass. They will also develop claws, and those claws of theirs will be just like the talons of vultures and eagles. They will burrow into the areas between the outer skin and the flesh of their victims, and rip them to shreds. They will give out a moaning sound in the process, and they will scurry to and fro, just as a frightened wild animal scurries to and fro. They will eat their victims' flesh and drink their blood, for they have no other form of food and drink.
>
> The angels will come and seize those people, then drag them along with their faces down on the live coals and stones, which stick out from the ground as if they were teeth. They will keep dragging them along until they reach the ocean of Hell *[Jahannam]*. This means covering the distance of a journey taking seventy years, so they will not reach it until all their joints are broken, nor without having their skins stripped and replaced no fewer than seventy thousand times each day. When the angels finally bring them to their destination, they will hand them over to the keepers of the ocean of Hell, who will immediately grab them by their legs and shove them into it. No one knows the depth of that ocean, except the One who created it.

According to some accounts, the following description is recorded in one of the books of the Torah *[asfār at-Tawrāh]*:

> The ocean of this world, by comparison with the ocean of Hell, is like a small well on the shore of the ocean of this world. So, when they are thrown into it, and experience the first touch of the torment it has to offer, they will say to one another: "As it seems now, the torment inflicted upon us before this was actually a form of gentle clemency."

The traditional report continues:

> They will sink down once, before rising again to the surface. Then the ocean will boil, as it plunges them down to a depth of seventy fathoms. The distance of each fathom will be equivalent to the distance of the East from the West. Then the angels will herd them together with their goading irons, beating them with these sharp rods and driving them back down to the very bottom of the ocean, to the distance of a journey taking seventy years. Their only food and drink will be what the ocean provides, so they will rise back up from its lowest depth, covering the distance of a journey taking one hundred and forty years.

> A person is not keeping the fast as long as he continues to devour the flesh of human beings![86]

Ḥudhaifa ibn Yamān[87] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:[88] "If a man peers down at a woman's back from the top of her dress, his fast is thereby rendered invalid."

Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh[89] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:[90] "Whenever you fast, make sure that your ears, your eyes and your tongue participate in the fasting—by abstaining from telling lies and from looking at or listening to unlawful things. You must also refrain from giving trouble to your neighbor. Comport yourself with dignity and calm composure, and do not treat your day of fasting as if it were no different from your day of breaking fast."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> Many a person who keeps the fast gains nothing from his fasting but hunger and thirst, and many a person who stays awake at night gains nothing from his vigil except insomnia.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The Heavenly Throne trembles for someone like that, and the Lord is angry with him.

He was referring (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to the case of someone whose purpose in doing good work is not to earn the favor of elimination of reprehensible behavior by the best of all possible means, as in the case of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Masʿūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him).[278]

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[86] This is one of several sayings in which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) condemns backbiting *[ghība]* as tantamount to devouring human flesh.

[87] Abū 'Abdi'llāh Hudhaifa ibn al-Yamān al-'Absī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was among the earliest to embrace Islām, and he came to be one of the most distinguished of all the Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He was famous for his dedication to an abstinent way of life. Together with Abu'd-Dardā' and Abū Dharr (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), he was one of those Companions who were called *ṣāḥib sirr an-Nabī*, because of the secret knowledge imparted to them by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He died in A.H. 36.

[88] **Author's note.** This report was also conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā', on the authority of his father, who cited a chain of transmission *[isnād]* in support of its attribution to Hudhaifa ibn Yamān (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

[89] Abū 'Abdi'llāh Jābir ibn 'Abdu'llāh al-Anṣārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was a Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). Noted as a prolific narrator of traditions, he died at Medina in A.H. 68 or 73 or 78.

[90] **Author's note:** This report was also conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā', on the authority of his father, who cited a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **Sulaimān ibn Mūsā—Jābir ibn 'Abdu'llāh** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

Let us also consider the blessed grace *[baraka]* that was bestowed in recognition of devout service *[ʿibāda]* and truthfulness *[ṣidq]* on the part of that pious worshipper, as we recall how Allāh rescued him from the prostitute and saved him from the commission of a major sin.

> So it was, that We might turn evil and lewdness away from him; he was surely one of Our devoted servants. (12:24)

Allāh (Exalted is He) intervened between him and that harlot, giving him credit for his previous good conduct, for his honesty in private situations, and the excellent quality of his obedience in all the days and hours that had gone before.

Let us go on to consider how Allāh (Exalted is He) granted salvation to that whore, through the blessed influence of the pious worshipper, and then how his blessed influence reached his brother. Let us remember that Allāh delivered the man's brother from his life of poverty and hardship, and married him to the best of women. He enriched him and provided for him from a source he could never have imagined.[279] He caused him to be the father of seven Prophets *[anbiyāʾ]*, and He caused her to be their mother (peace be upon them all).

All that is good resides in worshipful obedience, and all that is evil lies in sinful disobedience, so away with sinful disobedience, and away with us too, if we are members of its family!

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[278] As the reader will no doubt recall, ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Masʿūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was instrumental in reforming the conduct of Zādhān.

[279] An allusion to the promise made by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), when He tells us in the Qur'ān:

> And whenever someone observes his duty to Allāh, Allāh will prepare a way out for him. And He will provide for him from sources he could never imagine. And whoever puts all his trust in Allāh, He will suffice him *[wa man yattaqi'llāha yajʿal lahu makhrajā—wa yarzuqhu min haithu lā yaḥtasib: wa man yatawakkal ʿala'llāhi fa-Huwa ḥasbuh]* (65:2,3)

The following story has been narrated to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr:[94]

A man belonging to one of the desert tribes once came to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and said: "O Messenger of Allāh, tell me all about this fasting of yours!" The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was so enraged by this that his cheeks became brightly flushed. When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) observed what was happening, he approached the man and scolded and upbraided him until he had made him hold his tongue. As soon as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had regained his composure and was obviously in a more cheerful mood, 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) ventured to say: "May Allāh let me serve as your ransom! Tell me about the condition of a man who is always fasting, someone who fasts during every day of every year *[ad-dahr kullahu]*." To this he received the reply: "May that person neither fast nor break fast *[lā ṣāma wa lā afṭara]*!"[95] So 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) went on to say: "O Prophet of Allāh, tell me how it is for a man who fasts during three days out of every month." The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told him: "That is [really] fasting 'all the time'!" 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) then said: "O Prophet of Allāh, tell me how it is for a man who fasts on Monday and Thursday." To this the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied: "As for Thursday, that is the day on which deeds are recorded in Heaven above. As for Monday, that is the day on which I was born, and on which the Divine inspiration *[waḥy]* was first communicated to me."

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[94] **Author's note**: Shaikh Abū Naṣr has related this story on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir—Jābir ibn 'Abdu'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

[95] In one version of this traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is said to have exclaimed: "He who fasts all the time, may he neither fast nor return to what is good in normal everyday life *[man ṣāma 'd-dahra fa-lā ṣāma wa lā āla]*!" In either case, according to traditional authorities, this is an imprecation uttered by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), "lest a man should come to believe that this kind of fasting has been ordained by Allāh (Exalted is He), or, through physical incapacity, should become insincere, or because, by fasting all the days of the year, he would do so even on the days when fasting is strictly forbidden." (See E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. '-W-L.)

What to say at the time of breaking one's fast.

When the time for breaking fast *[iftār]* has arrived, it is appropriate to say, at the moment of taking the food or drink with which the fast is broken:[96]

In the Name of Allāh. O Allāh,	*Bismi'llāh*
for Your sake I have tasted, and on	*Allāhumma laka sumtu*
Your sustenance I have broken fast.	*wa 'alā rizqika aftartu.*
Glory be to You and with Your praise!	*Subhānaka wa bi-hamdik.*
O Allāh, accept from us, for You	*Allāhumma taqabbal minnā*
are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.	*innaka Anta 's-Samī'u 'l-'Alīm.*

'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Ās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) used to say, at the moment of breaking his fast:

O Allāh, I beg You,	*Allāhumma innī as'aluka*
through Your mercy that embraces	*bi-rahmatika 'llatī wasi'at*
all things, to forgive me.	*kulla shai'in an taghfira lī.*

Abū 'l-'Āliya (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said that anyone who utters the following words, at the moment of breaking his fast, will be as clear of his sins as he was on the day when his mother gave him birth:

Praise be to Allāh, who transcends	*al-hamdu li'llāhi 'lladhī 'alā*
and so prevails.	*fa-qahar.*
Praise be to Allāh, who sees	*wa 'l-hamdu li'llāhi 'lladhī nazara*
and therefore knows.	*fa-khabar.*
Praise be to Allāh, who reigns	*wa 'l-hamdu li'llāhi 'lladhī malaka*
and so controls.	*fa-qadar.*
Praise be to Allāh,	*wa 'l-hamdu li'llāhi 'lladhī*
who restores the dead to life.	*yuhyi 'l-mawtā.*

According to a traditional report,[97] when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) broke his fast in someone's home, he would say:

> May all who fast enjoy breaking fast in your home! May all good folk enjoy the taste of your food! And may the angels bless you in their prayers!

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[96] It is recommended to break the fast promptly *[ta'jīl al-fitr]*, except on a cloudy day, when it is better to delay doing so [in order to be quite sure that the sun has indeed set]. The preferred custom is to break one's fast on dates or with water. (See Vol. 1, p. 23.)

[97] *Author's note:* For this report, the earliest authorities in the chain of transmission are Mus'ab ibn Sa'd—'Abdu'llāh ibn az-Zubair—Sa'd ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with them).

The month of Rajab is a time when prayers of supplication are sure to be answered.

As you ought to be aware, the month of Rajab is a time when prayers of supplication are sure to be answered, and a time when unfortunate mistakes are written off. You should also be aware, however, that the punishment is multiplied for anyone who commits a serious offense in the course of this month. This point is clearly illustrated by the experience of a man who lived during the Caliphate of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), according to the following account, which has been narrated to us by [Shaikh Imām] Hibatu'llāh [ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī]:[98]

Al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said: "While we were performing the *tawāf* [circumambulation of the Kaʿba], we heard a voice crying out [in rhymed and metrical Arabic]:

'O You who answer the plea of the victim of tyranny *[ẓulm]*!
O Banisher of sorrow and distress, together with disease *[suqm]*!

Your pilgrims spent the night around the House and Sanctuary *[ḥaram]*,
and while we prayed the Eye of Allāh did not sleep *[lam tanam]*.

Forgive me, through Your grace, my sins and my transgression *[jurm]*,
O You to whom all creatures look for generous favor *[karam]*!

Unless Your pardon is bestowed upon a villain *[mujtarim]*,
whom else do sinners have to shower them with blessings *[niʿam]*?'"

Al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) went on to say: "My father, ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), then turned to me and said: 'Do you not hear that person lamenting his sin and remonstrating with his Lord? Go after him at once, while you may still be in time to catch him, and summon him here to me!'"

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[98] **Author's note:** Shaikh Imām Hibatu'llāh learned of this report through the following chain of transmission: **al-Qāḍī [the Judge] Hunād ibn Ibrāhīm an-Nasafī—ʿAbd al-Qāhir ibn ʿUmar al-Jazarī—Muḥammad ibn al-Farkhān—Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusain ibn Saʿīd al-Anbārī—Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Yaʿqūb—Ibrāhīm ibn Farrāsh—ʿAmr ibn Sumra—Mūsā ibn al-ʿAbbās—al-Aṣbagh—his daughters—al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

Al-Ḥusain (may Allāh be well pleased with him) continued: "So I ran at top speed until I caught up with him, and then, to my surprise, I found myself in the presence of a man with a strikingly handsome face, smartly dressed, pleasantly perfumed, and in excellent physical shape—except that his right side had been smitten with paralysis! 'You must come with me,' I told him, 'in response to a summons from the Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Mu'minīn]*, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh ennoble his countenance).' The man complied, and the following conversation ensued:

"'Who are you, and what is the matter with you?'

"'O Commander of the Believers, what is the matter with someone who has been made to suffer chastisement and has been deprived of all normal rights?'

"'What is your name?'

"'Munāzil ibn Lāḥiq.'

"'And what is your story?'

"'I was notorious among the Arabs [of the desert] on account of my addiction to frivolous amusement *[lahw]* and thrilling entertainment *[ṭarab]*. I ran wild in my youth and I never really came to my senses. If I tried to repent, my repentance would not be accepted. If I tried to apologize, my apology would not be accepted. I persisted in sinful disobedience, even during Rajab and Sha'bān. I did have a kindhearted and attentive father, who was always warning me to beware of the perils of ignorant folly, and of the misery that would result from sinful disobedience. "O my dear son," he would say, "Allāh has many harsh countermeasures and reprisals to inflict on those who disobey Him, so do not act in defiance of One who can punish you with the Fire of Hell! Your antics have already provoked too many complaints from the tyrants *[az-ẓullām]*, as well as from the noble angels *[al-malā'ikat al-kirām]*, the sacred month *[ash-shahr al-ḥarām]*, and all the nights and days *[al-layālī wa 'l-ayyām]*." The more he persisted in scolding me, however, the more I persisted in hitting him with my fists, until I approached him one day and he said: "By Allāh, I swear that I shall fast without taking a break, and that I shall pray through the night without

sleeping!" He kept his vow by fasting every day for a week, then he mounted an ash-colored camel and rode to Mecca, where he arrived on the day of the Major Pilgrimage *[al-Ḥajj al-Akbar]*.[99] He had said: "I firmly intend to go [as a pilgrim] to the House of Allāh, and to ask Allāh for His help in dealing with you!" And so it came to pass. Having arrived in Mecca on the day of the Major Pilgrimage, he invoked a curse upon me. While clinging to the curtains draped over the Ka'ba, he said [in rhymed and metrical Arabic]:

"'"O You to whom the pilgrims have come from afar,
hoping for the gracious favor of One who is Mighty, Single, Everlasting!

This Munāzil will not refrain from treating me abusively,
so exact what is due to me, O Merciful One, from my own son!

Paralyse one side of him, as a generous gift from You,
O You who are Most Holy, the One who was not begotten and does not beget!"'

"Munāzil went on to say: 'By the One who holds the heaven aloft and causes the water to flow, no sooner had my father uttered these words than my right side was stricken with paralysis! I was left lying around like a piece of discarded timber in the vicinity of the Sanctuary, and people kept coming to see me out of curiosity. They would tell one another: "This man's condition is due to his father's appeal, which Allāh accepted and put into effect."'

"The Commander of the Believers (may Allāh be well pleased with him) asked him: 'What did your father do next?'

"Munāzil replied: 'O Commander of the Believers, I begged him to invoke Allāh's blessing upon me, in the very same places where he had invoked the curse upon me. This was after he had come to regard me with approval, so he responded positively to my request. He installed me beside him on the back of a she-camel, and the beast kept going at a steady pace until we reached a dry river bed called Thornbush Valley *[Wādi 'l-Arāk]*. It was then that a startled bird flew out of a tree. The she-camel bolted and my father fell from her back. He died right there on the road.'

"'Alī then said (may Allāh be well pleased with him): 'Would you like me to teach you some prayers of supplication? I learned them from Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who told me: "Whenever these prayers are offered by someone who is sorely distressed, it invariably happens that Allāh (Exalted is He) relieves him of his distress, and whenever they are offered by someone who is suffering from agonizing pain, it invariably happens that Allāh (Exalted is He) relieves him of his agony.'"

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[99] The Major Pilgrimage *[al-Ḥajj al-Akbar]* is a more solemn occasion than the Lesser Pilgrimage or Visitation *['Umra]* (see note 41 on p. 26 above).

"'Yes!' said Munāzil."

Al-Ḥusain ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) went on to tell the rest of the story:

"The Commander of the Believers (may Allāh be well pleased with him) thereupon proceeded to teach him those supplications. He learned them well, repeated them as his personal prayers, and recovered completely from his illness. When he next came to visit us, the man was perfectly fit and healthy, so I asked him: 'How did you go about it?'

"Munāzil said: 'In the still of the night I offered my prayer of supplication—once, and twice, and then for a third time, at which point I heard a voice calling out to me: "Allāh is enough for you *[ḥasbuka 'llāh]*! You have invoked Allāh by His Mightiest Name, to which He always responds when He is invoked by it, and in answer to which He always grants the supplicant's request." My eyes then carried me off to sleep and I began to dream. I saw Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in my dream, so I told him about my supplication. He said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "My uncle's son 'Alī has told the truth. It does contain the Mightiest Name of Allāh, to which He always responds when He is invoked by it, and in answer to which He always grants the supplicant's request." My eyes then carried me off to sleep a second time, and again I saw the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in my dream, so I said: "O Messenger of Allāh, I wish that I could hear the supplication *[du'ā']* from you!" He then said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "Say:

'O Allāh, I beg You to grant my request,	*Allāhumma innī as'aluka*
O Knower of that which is concealed!	*yā 'Ālima 'l-khafiyya*
O He by Whose Power	*yā Man-i 's-samā'u*
the sky has been raised aloft!	*bi-Qudratihi mabniyya*
O He by Whose Might the earth	*yā Man-i 'l-arḍu*
has been spread out here below!	*bi-'Izzatihi madḥiyya*
O He by Whose Majesty	*yā Man-i 'sh-shamsu*
the sun and the moon	*wa 'l-qamaru bi-nūri Jalālihi*
beam forth and shed their light!	*mushriqatun wa muḍiyya*
O He who shows favor	*yā Muqbilan 'alā kulli nafsin*

to every pure believing soul!	*mu'minatin zakiyya*
O He who allays the terrors	*yā Musakkina ru'bi 'l-khā'ifīna*
of the fearful and the devout!	*wa ahli 't-taqiyya*
O He in Whose Presence	*yā Man ḥawā'iju 'l-khalqi*
the needs of all creatures are fulfilled!	*'indahu maqḍiyya*
O He Who delivered Joseph	*yā Man najjā Yūsufa*
the bondage of slavery!	*min riqqi 'l-'ubūdiyya.*
O He Who has no gatekeeper	*yā Man laisa lahu*
to be called upon,	*bawwābun yunādā*
and no companion to be won over,	*wa lā ṣāḥibun yughshā*
and no minister to be bribed,	*wa lā wazīrun yu'ṭā*
and no one else	*wa lā ghairuhu*
to be addressed as a lord,	*rabbun yud'ā*
and Who does not add	*wa lā yazdādu 'alā*
to the number of requirements,	*kathrati 'l-ḥawā'iji*
except out of kindness	*illā karaman*
and generosity!	*wa jūdā.*
And may Allāh bless Muhammad	*wa ṣalla 'llāhu 'alā*
and his family.	*Muḥammadin wa ālihi*
And grant me my request,	*wa a'ṭinī su'ālī*
for You are Capable of all things!'"	*innaka 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*

"'It was then that I awoke, to find that I had been cured of my paralysis!'

"'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said: 'I urge you all to memorize this supplication thoroughly, for it is one of the treasures of the Heavenly Throne *[kanz min kunūz al-'Arsh]*."

Stories similar to this have been related from the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) and other periods. It would take a very long time to discuss them all in detail, but the moral, which is always essentially the same, may be summed up as follows:

No person of mature understanding *[dhū lubb]* should ever minimize the seriousness of sinful acts of disobedience *[ma'āṣī]* and acts of injustice and wrongdoing *[maẓālim]*, nor should he underestimate the effectiveness of the victim's prayer of supplication *[du'ā' al-maẓlūm]*, for, as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> [The consequence of] wrongdoing *[ẓulm]* will be murky shades of darkness *[ẓulumāt]* on the Day of Resurrection.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If the servant holds out his open palms toward Him with a prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*, Allāh will surely consider it unworthy of Him to turn those palms away

> and leave the supplicant empty-handed [*ṣifr*],[100] so He will either grant him a gift immediately, here in this world, or present it to him later, on the Day of Resurrection.

This warning [not to underestimate the effectiveness of the victim's prayer of supplication] has also been expressed in these lines of poetry:

Do you hear the supplication only to make light of it?
If so, your fate will prove the effectiveness of supplication [*du'ā'*].

The arrows of the night are not about to miss their target,
they fly along a path, and that path has a point of termination [*inqiḍā'*]

* * *

This brings us to the end of the Fifth Discourse.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn*].

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[100] After undergoing various transformations through Medieval Latin [*cifra/zephirum*], Italian [*zero*] and French [*cifre/zero*], the Arabic word *ṣifr* [empty, void, naught, nothing] has given us the two English words "cipher" and "zero"

The Sixth Discourse

On the special merit of the month of Sha'bān, and the divine forgiveness *[maghfira]* and good pleasure *[riḍwān]* sent down on the middle night of that month.

'Ā'isha, the wife of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace, and may He be well pleased with her), is reported as having said:[101]

> Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to fast until we would say he was never going to stop fasting, and he would go so long without fasting that we would say he was never going to fast, but I never saw Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continue a fast from the beginning to the end of any month except the month of Ramadān, [apart from which] I never saw him do more fasting in any month than he did in Sha'bān.[102]

'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is also reported as having said:[103]

> Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to fast until we would say he was never going to stop fasting, and go so long without fasting that we would say he was never going to fast. The fasting he liked best was that he did in Sha'bān, so I said to him: "O Messenger of Allāh, how is it I always see

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[101] **Author's note:** We are informed of this report by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad [ibn al-Bannā'], who cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]*: His own father, Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad—Abu'l-Husain 'Alī ibn Muhammad ibn 'Umar ibn Hafs Ja'far al-Muqri—Abu'l-Fath al-Hāfiz—Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ash-Shāfi'ī—Ishāq ibn al-Hasan—'Abdu'llāh ibn Salama—Mālik ibn Anas—Abu'n-Nadr, the client of 'Umar ibn 'Abdi'llāh—Abū Salama ibn 'Abd ar-Rahmān—'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

[102] **Author's note:** This is an authentic tradition *[hadīth sahīh]*, cited by al-Bukhārī on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn Yūsuf, who transmitted it from Mālik [ibn Anas] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him.)

[103] **Author's note:** We learned of this report from Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad, on the authority of his father, with a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from Hishām ibn 'Urwa—'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

> you fasting in Sha'bān?" and he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "O 'Ā'isha, it is the month in which the Angel of Death has to note down the name of anyone whose soul he must take before the year is out, so I would rather he did not record my name except while I am fasting."

Umm Salama[104] (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said:[105]

> In no other month, apart from Ramadān, did Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) fast more often than in Sha'bān. And that was because, each Sha'bān, all who must die in the course of that year have their names transcribed from the list of the living onto that of the dead, and a man may embark on a journey even while his name is listed among those about to die.

Anas [ibn Mālik] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said:[106]

> When asked about the most meritorious fasting, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: "Fasting in Sha'bān in honor of Ramadān."

'Ubaidu'llāh ibn Qais once heard 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) say:[107]

> The dearest of months to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was Sha'bān, which he would link to Ramadān.

According to 'Abdu'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Anyone who fasts on the last Monday of Sha'bān will be granted forgiveness.

—meaning the last Monday that falls within it, not as the very last day of the month, for it is forbidden to anticipate the month [of Ramaḍān] by one or two days.

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is the authority for the report that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> It is called Sha'bān simply because it is juxtaposed *[yatasha''abu]* to Ramadān, containing many blessings, while Ramadān is so called because it scorches *[yurmidu]* sins.

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[104] Like 'Ā'isha, Umm Salama is revered as one of the "Mothers of the Believers *[Ummahāt al-Mu'minīn]*," the wives of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace, and may He be well pleased with them all).

[105] ***Author's note.*** We learned of this report from Shaikh Abu Nasr Muhammad, on the authority of his father, with a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from 'Atā' ibn Yasār—Umm Salama (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

[106] ***Author's note.*** As reported by Shaikh Abu Nasr, on the authority of his father, with a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from Thābit—Anas [ibn Mālik] (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[107] ***Author's note:*** As reported by Shaikh Abu Nasr, on the authority of his father, with a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from Mu'āwiya ibn as-Ṣāliḥ—'Ubaidu'llāh ibn Qays—'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Your Lord creates and chooses what He wills. (28:68)
wa Rabbuka yakhluqu mā yashā'u wa yakhtār.

Thus Allāh (Exalted is He) has selected four out of each kind of thing, then He has chosen one of the four:

From among the Angels, He selected Gabriel *[Jibrīl]*, Michael *[Mīkā'īl]*, Isrāfīl and ʿAzrā'īl, then He chose Gabriel from these four.

From all the Prophets (peace be upon them), the four He selected were Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (Allāh bless them all, and give them peace), then of these He chose Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

The four He selected from among the Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them) were Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān and ʿAlī, and His preferred choice was Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

The four mosques: The Sanctuary Mosque [by the Kaʿba in Mecca], al-Aqṣā Mosque [in Jerusalem], the Mosque of Medina the Ennobled City, and the Mosque of Mount Sinai. Of these He chose the Sanctuary Mosque *[al-Masjid al-Ḥarām]*.

The four days: The Day of Breaking Fast *[Yaum al-Fiṭr]*, the Day of Sacrifice *[Yaum al-Aḍḥā]*,[108] the Day of ʿArafa,[109] and the Day of ʿĀshūrā'.[110] Of these He then chose the Day of ʿArafa.

The four nights: The Night of Absolution *[Lailat al-Barā'a]*,[111] the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*, the Night of Friday Congregation *[Lailat al-Jumʿa]*,[112] and the Night of the Festival *[Lailat al-ʿĪd]*. Of these He chose the Night of Power.

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[108] The Day of Sacrifice *[Yaum al-Aḍḥā]* is the tenth day of Dhu'l-Ḥijja, the month of Pilgrimage.

[109] The Day of ʿArafa *[Yaum ʿArafa]* is the ninth day of Dhu'l-Ḥijja, the month of Pilgrimage.

[110] The Day of ʿĀshūrā' *[Yaum ʿĀshūrā']* is the tenth day of Muharram, which is the first month of the year in the Islamic calendar. See pp. 278–94 below.

[111] The Night of Absolution *[Lailat al-Barā'a]* is discussed on pp. 60–68 below.

[112] The Day of Congregational Prayer *[al-Jumʿa]* is Friday—but please remember that Friday night in the Islamic calendar is the night that begins at sunset on Thursday!

The four sites: Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, and the Mosques of the Tribes [*Masājid al-'Ashā'ir*]. Of these He chose Mecca.

The four mountains: Uhud, Sinai, Likām, and Lebanon [*Lubnān*]. Of these He chose Mount Sinai.

The four rivers: Jaihūn, Saihūn, the Euphrates [*al-Furāt*] and the Nile [*an-Nīl*]. Of these He chose the Euphrates.

The four months: Rajab, Sha'bān, Ramadān, and al-Muharram. Of these He chose the month of Sha'bān, and made it the Prophet's own month (Allāh bless him and give him peace). So, just as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is the most excellent of Prophets, his month is the most excellent of months.

According to Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Sha'bān is my month, Rajab is Allāh's month, and Ramadān is the month of my Community. Sha'bān is the expiator, while Ramadān is the purifier.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Sha'bān is a month between Rajab and Ramadān. People tend to neglect it, but that is when the deeds of His servants ascend to the Lord of All the Worlds, so I would rather mine rose up while I was fasting.

According to Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The excellence of Rajab over other months is like the excellence of the Qur'ān over all other speech, while the excellence of Sha'bān over other months is like my excellence over the rest of the Prophets, and the excellence of Ramadān over other months is like the excellence of Allāh (Exalted is He) over all His creatures.

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having said:

"When the Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) beheld the new moon of Sha'bān, they would immerse themselves in reading their copies of the Qur'ān. The Muslims would pay the alms-due [*zakāt*] assessed on their wealth, thereby providing the means for the weak and the poor to fortify themselves in preparation for the fasting of the month of Ramadān. The governors would summon the prison inmates, to carry out the sentence on those convicted of major offences under Islamic law, and to set the rest free. Businessmen would set about paying their debts and collecting their dues. Then, when they beheld the new moon of Ramadān, they would bathe themselves and devote themselves to worship."

On the meanings of the five Arabic letters of the word *Sha'bān.*

The word *Sha'bān* [in the Arabic script] is spelled with five letters: *shīn*, *'ain*, *bā'*, *alif* and *nūn*. The *shīn* stands for *sharaf* [nobility], the *'ain* for *'uluww* [sublimity], the *bā'* for *birr* [piety], the *alif* for *ulfa* [harmonious intimacy],[113] and the *nūn* for *nūr* [radiant light].

These are the gifts from Allāh (Exalted is He) to His servant in this month. It is a month in which treasures are laid open, in which blessings are sent down, in which faults are forsworn, in which sins are expiated, and in which benedictions are multiplied upon Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the best of human creatures.

This is the month of blessings upon the Chosen Prophet. Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Allāh and His angels shower blessings	*inna 'llāha wa malā'ikata-hu*
on the Prophet. O you who believe,	*yuṣallūna 'ala 'n-Nabiyy:*
invoke blessings upon him and salute	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanū ṣallū*
him with a worthy salutation. (33:56)	*'alai-hi wa sallimū taslīmā.*

The blessing from Allāh is mercy; from the angels, intercession and petition for forgiveness; and from the believers, supplication and appreciation.

According to Mujāhid (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "The blessing from Allāh is prosperity and virtue; from the angels, help and support; and from the believers, compliance and respect."

It was Ibn 'Aṭā' who said: "The blessing on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) from Allāh (Exalted is He) is conjunction, from the angels it is tender care, and from the believers it is following with affection."

[113] In the Arabic script, an initial letter *alif* merely serves to indicate that the word concerned begins with a vowel. An extra sign is sometimes added to indicate whether that vowel is *a*, *i*, or *u*. When *alif* occurs between two consonants, however, (e.g., between the letters *bā'* and *nūn* in the word *Sha'bān*) it indicates the long vowel *ā*.

As someone else put it: "The blessing of the Lord (Blessed and Exalted is He) upon His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is the enhancement of respect. The blessing of the angels upon him (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is the display of gracious favor. The blessing of his Community upon him (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is the request for intercession."

As he himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> When someone pronounces a single blessing on me, Allāh blesses him ten times.

Far from being negligent during this month, therefore, every conscientious believer is obliged to exert himself in preparation for the coming month of Ramadān, using the days that remain to get clear of sins and repent those committed in the past. One should beseech Allāh (Exalted is He) in the month of Sha'bān. One should appeal to Allāh (Exalted is He) through the owner of the month, Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), until the corruption of one's heart is corrected, and the sickness of one's inner being is cured.

This must be done without delay and not put off until tomorrow, for the days are three: yesterday, which is a date in history *[ajal]*; today, which is a time for action *['amal]*; and tomorrow, which is a hopeful expectation *[amal]*, for whether you will get there or not is beyond your ken. Thus yesterday is a caution, today is an opportunity, and tomorrow is a risk.

The months are likewise three: Rajab, now past and gone beyond return; Ramadān, awaiting in a future you may not live to see; and in between we have Sha'bān, so let us seize this opportunity for worshipful devotion.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to a man (some say it was 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb, may Allāh be well pleased with him) by way of stern advice:

> Make the most of five before five: youth before old age, health before sickness; wealth before poverty, ease before business, and life before death.

"'If someone has fasted for seven days, he will be entitled to receive all the benefits mentioned up to this point, except that not just one but all seven of the gates of Hell will be locked to make sure that he cannot enter the Fire. Allāh will actually declare the Fire of Hell to be strictly off-limits as far as he is concerned, and He will make it obligatory for him to dwell in the Garden of Paradise, in any part of which he may choose to settle down.

"'If someone has fasted for eight days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits. The eight gates of the Garden of Paradise will also be held open for him, so that he may enter therein by whichever gate he happens to prefer.

"'If someone has fasted for nine days, he will be entitled to receive those very same benefits. In addition, his record will be raised aloft in the uppermost heaven *['Illiyyūn]*.[26] When he is restored to life on the Day of Resurrection, he will be among those who are safe and secure *[āminīn]*. When he is brought forth from his grave, his face will be a brilliantly shining light. His radiance will illuminate the scene so brightly for the people in the assembled throng that they will say: "This must be a chosen Prophet *[nabī muṣṭafā]*!" He will be admitted to the Garden of Paradise without being subjected to any reckoning, but this will be the least significant of all the gifts granted to him!

"'If someone has fasted for ten days, he deserves the heartiest congratulations. Bravo, bravo *[fa-bakh fa-bakh]* to him! He will be entitled to all the benefits mentioned up to this point, but they will be multiplied tenfold. He will one of those whose bad deeds Allāh replaces with good deeds. He will be numbered among those who are drawn near to His presence, as staunch upholders of justice for the sake of Allāh *[qawwāmīna li'llāhi bi'l-qisṭ]*,[27] and he will be like someone who has worshipped Allāh faithfully for a thousand years, fasting, standing [to perform the *ṣalāt*-prayer], enduring with patience and reckoning only on His reward in the hereafter.

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[26] Q. 83:18-21.

[27] An allusion to the verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān in which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) tells the believers:

Be staunch upholders of justice, witnesses for Allāh. (4:135)	*kūnū qawwāmīna bi'l-qisṭi* *shuhadā'a li'llāhi*

Part of its blessedness lies in the fact that all life depends on it. In the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And We made every living thing	*wa ja'alnā mina 'l-mā'i kulla*
from water.	*shai'in ḥayy:*
Will they not then believe? (21:30)	*a-fa-lā yu'minūn*

Water is said to contain ten subtle properties: delicateness, suppleness, energy, fluency, limpidity, mobility, moistness, coolness, humility and vitality. Allāh (Exalted is He) has imbued the conscientious believer *[mu'min labīb]* with these same properties, namely, refinement of the heart, flexibility of temperament, energy in obedient service, politeness of the personality, purity of behavior, movement in good works, moistness in the eye, coolness toward sinful transgressions, humility toward fellow creatures, and vitality in heeding the truth.

The olive tree is another thing called 'blessed' by Allāh (Exalted and Glorious is He):

From a blessed tree,	*min shajaratin mubārakatin*
an olive.... (24:35)	*zaitūnatin....*

This was the first tree from which Adam (peace be upon him) ate when he was cast down to earth. It contains nourishment and enlightenment. In the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

...and relish for the eaters. (23:20)	*wa ṣibghin li'l-ākilīn.*

Some say the 'blessed tree' is Abraham (peace be upon him), some say it is the Qur'ān, and others say it is true faith. Still others say it is the tranquil soul of the believer, insistent on good conduct, obedient to commandment, restrained by prohibition, submitted to destiny, conforming to the Lord in what He has decreed and ruled.

Jesus (peace be upon him) is also among those Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) calls 'blessed':

[Jesus said] "And He has made	*wa ja'ala-nī mubārakan*
me blessed wherever I may be."	*aina-mā kuntu.*
(19:31)	

His blessedness (peace be upon him) includes the sprouting of the fruit from the date palm for his faithful mother, Mary (peace be upon both mother and son), and the gushing forth of water beneath him.

In the words of the Almighty and Glorious One:

Then [a voice] cried to her from below	*fa-nādā-hā min taḥti-hā*
her, saying: "Grieve not, for your Lord	*allā taḥzanī qad ja'ala Rabbu-ki*
has placed a rivulet beneath you.	*taḥta-ki sariyyā. wa huzzī ilai-ki*
And shake the trunk of the palm-tree	*bi-jidh'i 'n-nakhlati tusāqiṭ*
toward you: It will cause ripe dates	*'alai-ki ruṭaban janiyyā.*
to fall upon you. So eat and drink	*fa-kulī wa 'shrabī*
and be consoled." (19:24-26)	*wa qarrī 'ainā.*

Among other good deeds and miracles, he healed the blind and cured the leper, and brought the dead to life by his supplication.

The Ka'ba is one of the things called 'blessed' by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The first House appointed for	*inna awwala Baitin wuḍi'a*
mankind was that at Bakka,	*li'n-nāsi la-'lladhī bi-Bakkata*
a blessed place. (3:96)	*mubārakan.*

Part of its blessedness is that one who enters it, bearing a heavy load of sins, will come out having been forgiven. Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

And anyone who enters it is safe. (3:97)	*wa man dakhala-hu kāna āminā.*

So if someone enters the House as a believer, aware of his sins and repentant, Allāh waives his punishment, accepts his repentance and forgives him. It is also said that anyone who enters it is immune to wrongdoing, as long as he remains within the Sacred Precinct. It is therefore unlawful to kill the game there, or to fell the trees.

The sanctity of the Ka'ba is due to the sanctity of Allāh, the sanctity of the Mosque to the sanctity of the Ka'ba, the sanctity of the Mecca to the sanctity of the Mosque, and the sanctity of the Sacred Precinct to the sanctity of Mecca. As it is said: "The Ka'ba is a *Qibla* [direction of prayer] for the people of the Mosque, the Mosque is a *Qibla* for the people of Mecca, Mecca[115] is a *Qibla* for the people of the Sacred Precinct, and the Sacred Precinct is a *Qibla* for the people of the earth.

The Night of Absolution has also been called 'blessed', because it is a vessel for the mercy, blessing, benefit, pardon and forgiveness descending for the people on earth.

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[115] **Author's note:** It is called 'Bakka' [in the Qur'ān] to suggest the 'pitter-patter' of the [pilgrims'] feet. Bakka and Makka/Mecca are one and interchangeable, just like [the Arabic words] *kamd* with *kahd* and *lazm* with *lazb*.

According to Abū Nasr, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:[116]

> On the night of the middle of Sha'bān, Allāh (Exalted is He) descends to the heaven of this lower world and forgives every Muslim, excepting only the idolater, the bearer of malice, the breaker of family ties, or the woman who is sexually promiscuous.

Again from Abū Nasr, we learn that 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said:[117]

"When it was the night of mid-Sha'bān, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had removed a garment of mine." Then she added, "By Allāh! That garment of mine was not of silk, nor of raw silk, nor of linen, nor of silk and wool, nor of wool." [The reporter said:] "'Glory be to Allāh!' I said to her, 'So what was it made of?'" She replied: "Its warp was of hair and its weft was of silk. I reckoned that he (Allāh bless him and give him peace) might have gone to one of his [other] wives, so I got up and searched for him in the [darkness of the] apartment. My hand made contact with his feet, as he was prostrate in worship. Of his prayer (Allāh bless him and give him peace), I remember these words:

> Prostrate before You are my form and my spirit, and my heart is in Your safekeeping. I acknowledge Your favors, and to You I confess my sin. I have wronged myself, so forgive me; surely none forgives sins but You. I seek refuge with Your pardon from Your punishment, with Your mercy from Your vengeance, with Your approval from Your displeasure. I seek refuge with You from You. I do not tell Your praises, for You are as You have extolled Yourself.

She continued: "So he did not cease from worship, now standing and now sitting [on his heels], until morning came. Then his feet were put up, and as I massaged them I said: 'My father be your ransom and my mother too! Surely Allāh has forgiven your former and your latter sins? Surely Allāh has dealt with you! Is it not so? Is it not so?'

"He replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'O 'Ā'isha, shall I not therefore be a grateful servant? Do you know what happens during this night?' 'What happens?' I asked, and he said: 'This is when all births are recorded for this year, and every death is registered. This is when provisions are allotted to mankind, and their deeds and actions are gathered up.'

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[116] **Author's note:** Abū Nasr heard this report from his father, who cited the following chain of transmission *(isnād)*: **'Abdu'llāh ibn Muhammad—Isma'il ibn 'Umar al-Bajli—'Umar ibn Mūsā al-Wajhi— Zaid ibn 'Ali (via his forefathers)—'Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib** (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[117] **Author's note:** Abū Nasr heard this report from his father, who cited the following chain of transmission *(isnād)*: **Yahya ibn Sa'id—'Urwa—'Ā'isha** (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

"'O Messenger of Allāh,' said I, 'Will no one enter Paradise except by Allāh's mercy?' 'No one will enter Paradise except by Allāh's mercy,' he told me (Allāh bless him and give him peace). 'Not even you?' I asked. 'Not even I,' said he (Allāh bless him and give him peace), 'unless Allāh envelops me with His mercy.' Then he rubbed his hand over his head and his face."

The following account, which I also received from Abū Nasr,[118] tells how 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) related that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to her:

"O 'Ā'isha, what night is this?" She replied, "Allāh and His Messenger know best." Then he said: "The night of the middle of Sha'bān, during which worldly actions and the deeds of mankind are carried aloft. As numerous as the wool on the flocks of the tribe of Kalb, are Allāh's slaves emancipated this night from the Fire of Hell. So will you excuse me tonight?"

She said: "I said yes, so he performed his prayer like this: He held the upright position only briefly, and recited *al-Ḥamd* [119] and a short Sūra; then he stayed in prostration till the middle of the night; then he stood up to begin the second cycle with a recitation similar to the first, and then his prostration lasted until dawn."

'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) went on to say: "I watched him till I thought that Allāh (Exalted is He) had taken His Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), then, after a long time had elapsed, I got close enough to touch the soles of his feet. He stirred, and I heard him say in his prostration: 'I take refuge with Your pardon from Your punishment. I take refuge with Your approval from Your displeasure. I take refuge with You from You. Glorious be Your praise! I do not spell out praises upon You, for You are as You have extolled Yourself.'

"I said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, tonight I have heard you utter something, during your prostration, that I never heard you mention before?' 'And have you learned it?' he asked (Allāh bless him and give him peace). When I said yes, he (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told me: 'Study those words and teach them, for Gabriel (peace be upon him) instructed me to repeat them during the prostration.'"

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[118] **Author's note.** Abū Nasr heard this report from his father, who cited the following chain of transmission (*isnād*): Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Hāfiz—'Abdu'llāh ibn Muhammad—Abu'l-'Abbās al-Harawī and Ibrāhīm ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hasan—Abū 'Āmir ad-Dimashqī—al-Walīd ibn Muslim—Hishām ibn al-Ghāz, Sulaimān ibn Muslim et al.—Makhūl—'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

[119] Another name for *al-Fātiha*.

According to another report, of which Abū Nasr informed me, 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said:[120]

"I could not find Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) one night, so I went outside and there he was in the grove, his head turned up toward the sky. Then he said to me: 'Were you afraid that Allāh and His Messenger would treat you unfairly?' I replied: 'O Messenger of Allāh, I thought you had gone to one of your [other] wives.' He said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'On the night of mid-Sha'bān, Allāh (Exalted is He) descends to the lowest heaven and forgives more than the number of woolly hairs on the flocks and herds of [the tribe of] Kalb.'"

'Ikrima (may Allāh bestow his mercy upon him), the client of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), is reported as having said, about the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

> [A night] in which every firm *fī-hā yufraqu*
> decree is made distinct. (44:4) *kullu amrin ḥakīm.*

"That is the night of mid-Sha'bān, when Allāh (Exalted is He) arranges the affairs of the year. He transfers [some of] the living to the list of the dead, and records those who will make pilgrimage to the House of Allāh, neither adding one too many nor leaving a single one of them out."

Ḥakīm ibn Kaysān said: "Allāh (Exalted is He) surveys His creatures on the night of mid-Sha'bān, and when He purifies someone then, He keeps that person clean until the next such night comes around."

According to 'Aṭā' ibn Yasār: "The activity of the year is mapped out on the night of mid-Sha'bān, so a man may embark on a journey, or get married, when he has already been transferred from the list of the living to that of the dead."

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[120] **Author's note:** Abu Nasr heard this report from his father, who cited the following chain of transmission [*isnād*]: 'Abdu'llāh ibn Muhammad—Ishaq ibn Ahmad al-Farisi—Ahmad ibn as-Ṣabbah ibn Abi Shurayh—Yazid ibn Harūn—al-Hajjaj ibn Artah—Yahya ibn Abi Kathir—'Urwa—'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

As someone else put it: "The blessing of the Lord (Blessed and Exalted is He) upon His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is the enhancement of respect. The blessing of the angels upon him (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is the display of gracious favor. The blessing of his Community upon him (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is the request for intercession."

As he himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> When someone pronounces a single blessing on me, Allāh blesses him ten times.

Far from being negligent during this month, therefore, every conscientious believer is obliged to exert himself in preparation for the coming month of Ramadān, using the days that remain to get clear of sins and repent those committed in the past. One should beseech Allāh (Exalted is He) in the month of Sha'bān. One should appeal to Allāh (Exalted is He) through the owner of the month, Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), until the corruption of one's heart is corrected, and the sickness of one's inner being is cured.

This must be done without delay and not put off until tomorrow, for the days are three: yesterday, which is a date in history *[ajal]*; today, which is a time for action *['amal]*; and tomorrow, which is a hopeful expectation *[amal]*, for whether you will get there or not is beyond your ken. Thus yesterday is a caution, today is an opportunity, and tomorrow is a risk.

The months are likewise three: Rajab, now past and gone beyond return; Ramadān, awaiting in a future you may not live to see; and in between we have Sha'bān, so let us seize this opportunity for worshipful devotion.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to a man (some say it was 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb, may Allāh be well pleased with him) by way of stern advice:

> Make the most of five before five: youth before old age, health before sickness; wealth before poverty, ease before business, and life before death.

On why the Night of Absolution *[Lailat al-Barā'a]* is so called.

Some say it is called the Night of Absolution *[Lailat al-Barā'a]* because it contains two absolutions: an absolution for wretched sinners from the All-Merciful, and an absolution from disappointment for the Friends [of Allāh].

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> When the night of mid-Sha'bān arrives, Allāh makes careful scrutiny of His creatures, then He forgives the true believers, gives respite to the unbelievers, and leaves the resentful to their resentment until they call for Him.

It is said that the angels have two Nights of Festival in heaven, just as the Muslims have two Days of Festival on earth. The angels celebrate the Night of Absolution and the Night of Power, while the Muslims celebrate the Day of Breakfast and the Day of Sacrifice. The angels have their festivals at night, because they never sleep, while the believers have theirs by day because they do sleep.

Concerning the wisdom in the decision of Allāh (Exalted is He) to make known [the date of] the Night of Absolution, while concealing [that of] the Night of Power, it has been said to lie in the fact that the Night of Power is the night of mercy and forgiveness and emancipation from the fires of Hell, which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has kept hidden so that there can be no discussion about it. He has made known the Night of Absolution, however, because it is the night of regulation and decree, the night of displeasure and approval, the night of acceptance and rejection, of attainment and obstruction, the night of bliss and woe, of grace and cleansing.

Thus one is favored while another is put off; one is requited while another is abased; one is treated generously while another is deprived; one is rewarded while another is shunned. Many a shroud is washed, while its owner is still busy in the bazaar. Many a grave is dug, while its owner is deluded with pleasure. Many a mouth is laughing, though it will soon be perishing. Many a house is under construction for an owner close to destruction. Many a servant expects a reward, while punishment awaits him. Many a servant hopes for good news, while disappointment lies in store. Many a servant looks forward to Paradise, while the fires of Hell are ready for him. Many a servant hopes for union, while separation lies ahead. Many a servant hopes for a gift, while agony awaits him. Many a servant is expecting wealth, while death is expecting him.

It is said of al-Ḥasan al-Basri (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) that he came out of his house on the day of mid-Sha'bān, looking as if he had been buried in the grave and then disinterred. When asked about this, he said: "By Allāh, what is the plight of a shipwrecked sailor, when compared to my own?" "Why is that?" "Because I am certain of my sins, but I tremble over my good deeds, for I know not whether they will be accepted of me or rejected."

Concerning the Prayer of Benefits *[Ṣalāt al-Khair]*, traditionally performed on the night of mid-Sha‘bān.

As for the ritual prayer traditional for the night of mid-Sha‘bān, it consists of one hundred cycles, including one thousand repetitions of "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']"[122] (that is to say, ten recitations in each cycle *[rak'a]*). This prayer is called *Ṣalāt al-Khair* [the Prayer of Benefits], and its blessings are many and varied. Our righteous predecessors used to gather to perform it in congregation. It contains much merit and rich reward.

It is reported of al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) that he once said:

"Thirty of the Companions of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) related to me that Allāh will look seventy times upon one who performs this prayer on this night, and with each glance He will fulfill seventy of that person's needs, the least of them being forgiveness."

It is also commendable to perform this prayer on the fourteen nights on which vigil is recommended, as we mentioned in [the chapter concerning] the merits of Rajab, so that the worshipper may thereby obtain this grace, this merit and reward.

This brings us to the end of the Sixth Discourse.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn].

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[122] Sūra 112.

The Seventh Discourse

On the excellent qualities of the month of Ramaḍān.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

O you who truly believe!	*yā ayyu-ha 'lladhīna āmanū*
Fasting is prescribed for you,	*kutiba ʿalai-kumu 'ṣ-ṣiyāmu*
even as it was prescribed	*ka-mā kutiba*
for those before you, in order that	*ʿala 'lladhīna min qabli-kum*
you may practice true devotion.	*laʿalla-kum tattaqūn.*
(2:183)	

Al-Ḥasan al-Basrī [123] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "Whenever you hear Allāh (Exalted is He) saying: 'O you who truly believe! *[yā ayyu-ha 'lladhīna āmanū]*,' you must listen carefully and pay the closest attention, for those words are intended to alert you, either to a commandment you have to obey, or to a prohibition you must not infringe."

It was Jaʿfar as-Ṣādiq [124] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "The summons has the delightful effect of dispelling the drudgery of obedient service and weary toil."

Let us now embark upon a detailed study of the Qurʾānic verse *[āya]* itself, beginning with the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

O you who truly believe!	*yā ayyu-ha 'lladhīna āmanū.*

1. *yā:*

The vocative particle *yā* [O...!] is an exclamatory interjection, uttered by someone who is well acquainted *[ʿālim]* with the person, or persons, whose attention he is seeking to attract. In this case, it is being uttered by the One who is All-Knowing *[ʿAlīm]*.

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[123] See note 74 on p. 40 above.

[124] Jaʿfar ibn Muhammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Husain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, known as "the Veracious" *[as-Ṣādiq]*, was the sixth of the twelve descendants of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who, according to the majority of the Shīʿa, are considered the rightful Imāms. He was celebrated for his expert knowledge of Tradition, and came to be regarded as a master of the esoteric sciences.

2. *ayyu:*

The connective element *ayyu* [(O) you...] is a pronoun *[ism]*,[125] referring to the recognized person, or persons, to whom the call or summons is being addressed *[al-maʿlūm al-munādā]*.

3. *-hā*:

As for the suffix *-hā*, this adds an intimate touch to the impact of the summoner's call, since it conveys the hint of prior acquaintance and long-standing friendship.

4. *alladhīna:*

[The next word, *alladhīna*, which is pronounced *'lladhīna* in this context, is simply the plural form of the relative pronoun *alladhī*, meaning "who."]

5. *āmanū*:

The special significance of the verb *āmanū* [truly believe][126] is that it points to the secret knowledge that is shared by the One who is summoning and the one who is being summoned *[as-sirr al-maʿlūm bi-yad al-Munādī wa 'l-munādā]*. It is as if He is saying: "O he who belongs to Me *[yā man huwa lī]*,[127] on account of that secret of his, to which he is sincerely devoted with his conscience *[ḍamīr]*, and with the very kernel of his being *[lubb]*...!"

This brings us to His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> Fasting is prescribed for you... *kutiba ʿalai-kumu 'ṣ-ṣiyāmu...*

6. *kutiba*:

To say that fasting is prescribed *[kutiba]*, is the same as saying that it has been imposed and made incumbent as a strictly obligatory religious duty *[furiḍa wa ūjiba]*.

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[125] The Arab grammarians apply the term *ism* [name] to noun and pronoun alike.

[126] The verb *āmanū* [truly believe] is derived from the same triliteral root as the corresponding verbal noun *īmān* [true belief, true faith]. According to the classical lexicographers, the primary meaning of *īmān* is: "becoming true to the trust with respect to which Allāh has confided in one, by a firm believing with the heart, not by profession of belief with the tongue only, without the assent of the heart, for he who does not firmly believe with his heart is either a hypocrite or an ignorant person." (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. ʾ-M-N.)

[127] The expression *yā man huwa* contains a sequence of sounds—*ā man hu*—in which one can hear a virtual echo of the word *āmanū*.

7. *ʿalai-kumu:*

[This means "upon (all of) you" or "for (all of) you."[128] The Arabic suffix *-kum* is a plural pronoun, indicating that more than two people are being addressed.[129] It is pronounced *-kumu* when followed by the definite article (*al-*, *aṣ-*, etc.), the initial vowel of which then becomes silent, as in the phrase *ʿalai-kumu ʾṣ-ṣiyāmu.*]

8. *ʾṣ-ṣiyāmu:*

In terms of Arabic grammar, the word *ṣiyām* [fasting] is a verbal noun *[maṣdar]*, which may be used as the object of the corresponding verb. Thus [if you wish to say, in Arabic, that you have kept fast throughout the daylight hours, and then spent the night awake, observing a prayerful vigil,] you may use the expression: *"Ṣumtu ṣiyāman wa qumtu qiyāman* [lit., I have fasted a fasting, and I have stayed awake a staying awake]."[130]

In the ordinary usage of the Arabic language, the basic meaning of *ṣiyām* [fasting] is summed up in the word *imsāk* [to cease and desist; to refrain; to abstain]. Consider the following idiomatic expressions:[131]

a) The expression *ṣāmat ar-rīḥ* [lit., the wind has fasted] may be used when the wind has calmed down and cease to blow.

b) The expression *ṣāmat al-khail* [lit., the horses have fasted] may be used when these animals have come to a halt, and have stopped to take a break from their journey.

c) The expression *ṣāma ʾn-nahār* [lit., the daytime has kept fast] may be used at the point of midday in summer, when the sun is at its height, and the shade has almost disappeared. This is a reference to the fact that the sun comes to a halt, when it reaches the center of the sky, and interrupts its progress for a brief moment. In the words of the anonymous poet:

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[128] The appropriate translation of the preposition *ʿalā* (which is pronounced *ʿalai-* when a pronoun is attached to it) will depend on the idiomatic usage of the English language. For instance, we may say that something is "incumbent *upon* you, because it is prescribed *for* you."

[129] In addition to the second person singular pronouns, masculine *-ka* and feminine *-ki*, both corresponding to the archaic English "thee," Arabic also has the dual form *-kumā* [(both of) you].

[130] The structure of the Arabic language makes it convenient for traditional grammarians and lexicographers to use a verb in the third person masculine singular, followed by the corresponding verbal noun *[maṣdar]* as its object, as their basic unit of reference. An interesting example occurs in Vol. 2, p. 87, where the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) discusses possible derivations of the Name "Allāh":

> According to an-Naḍr ibn Shumail, the Name "Allāh" may be derived ... from the expression *alaha ilāhatan*, which has the same meaning as *ʿabada ʿibādatan* [to serve, worship, adore].

[131] In each of the idiomatic expressions listed by the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the reader will notice the use of the Arabic verb *ṣāmat* or *ṣāma*, both forms of which are derived, like the verbal noun *ṣiyām*, from the root *ṣ—w—m*.

> Until, when the day keeps fast *[ṣāma 'n-nahār]*, having reached the point of noon,
> and gossamer threads *[lu'āb]* appear to fall, in the light of the summer sun....

d) When referring to a man who has remained silent and refrained from speaking, one may say that he has "fasted" *[ṣāma]*.

Allāh (Exalted is He) has also used the word *ṣaum* [fast][132] in the sense of abstinence from speech *[ṣamt]*,[133] for He has said:

Say, [O Mary]: "I have vowed	*fa-qūlī innī nadhartu*
a fast unto the All-Merciful,	*li'r-Raḥmāni ṣauman*
so I shall not speak this day	*fa-lan ukallima 'l-yauma*
to any human being." (19:26)	*insiyyā.*

As for its observance during the month of Ramaḍān, the Fast *[aṣ-Ṣaum]* is kept by abstaining *[imsāk]* from certain regular activities, namely, the consumption of food and drink, and engaging in sexual intercourse—even in the forms that are at other times permissible according to the Sacred Law *[ash-Shar']*—as well as by desisting and refraining from the commission of sins.

Fasting is prescribed, as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

even as it was prescribed	*ka-mā kutiba*
for those before you... (2:183)	*'ala 'lladhīna min qabli-kum...*

That is to say, for the Prophets *[Anbiyā']* and their communities *[umam]*, the very first of them being Adam (peace be upon him).

This interpretation is supported by the following traditional report, transmitted by 'Abd al-Malik ibn Hārūn ibn 'Antara on the authority of his father, Hārūn, who told 'Abd al-Malik that his grandfather, 'Antara, had said:

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[132] At least in the case of the term *ṣaum* [fast], the three root-letters <ṣ–u–m> are all clearly apparent. Since the Arabic letter *wāw* is a so-called 'weak' letter, it disappears from certain derived forms of any root of which it is one of the three elements. Thus in some of the words derived from the root ṣ–u–m, the central element may be 'hidden' in a long –ā– (represented by an *alif* in the Arabic script), a long –ū– (in which case the *wāw* is disguised in the transliteration, although it does appear in the original Arabic script), or it may have acquired the sound –y– or that of the long vowel –ī– (both represented by the Arabic letter *yā'*).

This should be borne in mind while reading this Discourse, so that the reader will understand the linguistic and semantic connections between linking various terms discussed by the author, such as *ṣiyām*, *ṣāma*, *ṣā'im*, *ṣumtu* and *ṣaum*—all of which are derivatives of the root ṣ–u–m. (For a detailed listing of these and other words, phrases and sayings derived from this root, see E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. Ṣ–W–M.)

[133] In light of the explanations in note 132 above, the reader could easily assume that the word *ṣamt* [silence, abstinence from speech] must also be derived from the triliteral root ṣ–u–m. In fact, however, it is derived from the root ṣ–m–t, which conveys the basic idea of "silence, speechlessness."

"I once heard 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) say: 'I came to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) one day, around the time of noon, while he was indoors in his room. I saluted him with the greeting of peace, and he returned my salutation, then he said: "O 'Alī, here is Gabriel, offering you the greeting of peace!" So I said: "Peace be unto you, and also unto him, O Messenger of Allāh!" He then said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "Come over here beside me," so I moved till I was close beside him, whereupon he said:

""O 'Alī, Gabriel is talking to you. He is saying: "You must fast during three days out of every month. For the first day, the reward of ten thousand years will be recorded in your favor; for the second day, the reward of thirty thousand years; and for the third day, the reward of three hundred thousand years."

""O Messenger of Allāh," said I, "is this reward for me in particular, for is it for all mankind in general?"

""O 'Alī," he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "Allāh will bestow this reward not only upon you, but also upon those who come after you, provided they perform the same good works as you do."

""O Messenger of Allāh," said I, "which days of the month are the three in question?"

In answer to my question, he told me (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "They are the three known as the "white" days *[al-ayyām al-bīḍ]*; that is to say, the the thirteenth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth of the month.""

'Antara then went on to say:

"So I said to 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him): 'Why do you call these days the "white" days?' 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) then told me the following story:

"'When Allāh (Exalted is He) evicted Adam (peace be upon him) from the Garden of Paradise, and sent him down to the earth, he was so scorched by the sun that his body turned as black as pitch. Gabriel (peace be upon him) then came to him and said: 'O Adam, would you like to have your skin turn white?' Adam said yes, he would like that very much, so Gabriel said to him: 'In that case, you must fast on the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth of the month.' Adam (peace be upon him) accepted the challenge, and began by fasting on the first of these days. As soon as he had done so, one third of his body turned white. Then he fasted on the second day, and found that two thirds of his body had now turned white. Then he fasted on the third day, after which the whole of his body had turned white. This explains why they are called the "white" days *[al-ayyām al-bīḍ]*.'"[134]

On the basis of this traditional account, assuming that we can accept it as genuinely authentic, it is clearly established that Adam (peace be upon him) was one of those for whom fasting was prescribed *[kutiba 's-ṣiyām]* before the time of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace). As we must not fail to mention, however, a different interpretation has been maintained by al-Ḥasan, whose view of this subject is shared by a significant group of learned experts in the field of Qur'ānic exegesis *[tafsīr]*:

"When Allāh (Exalted is He) speaks of 'those before you *[alladhīna min qabli-kum]*,' He is referring specifically to the Christians *[an-Naṣārā]*. He has likened our form of fasting to their form of fasting, on account of the close correspondence between the two, in terms of the time involved and the rigorous extent of the practice."

The fact of the matter is that Allāh (Exalted is He) did impose fasting during the month of Ramaḍān upon the Christians, as an obligatory religious duty. This proved to be extremely rigorous for them, however, since it [i.e., the lunar month of Ramaḍān] would sometimes come around during the season of intense heat, or in that of intense cold. It would also inconvenience them severely by interfering with their travel plans, and by disrupting the regular patterns of their daily lives. An agreement was therefore reached, by the common consent of their religious scholars *['ulamā']* and their political leaders *[ru'asā']*, on a proposal whereby they would fix their period of fasting in the season of the year between winter and summer. Having thus assigned it to the spring, they also extended it by ten extra days, as a penance *[kaffāra]* to atone for what they had done, and so it became a period of forty days.

Some time after this, a certain king of theirs complained of an painful ache in his mouth, so he made a proposal to Allāh, promising to add another week to their fast *[ṣaum]*, if he could be relieved of that painful ache. This resulted in their making a further extension to the period of fasting. Then that king died, and another king succeeded him as their ruler, at which point they finally rounded it out at fifty days.

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[134] See pp. 357–60 below.

It was Mujāhid[135] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "They were afflicted by a deadly plague, so their king said to them: 'You must add more days to your period of fasting!' So they added ten days to begin with, and another ten later on."

It was ash-Shaʿbī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Even if I were to fast during each and every day throughout the entire year, I would break my fast on the day concerning which there is some element of doubt, inasmuch as some may say it is [the last day] of Shaʿbān, while others are calling it [the first] of Ramaḍān.[136] My reason for being so scrupulous is that fasting during the month of Ramaḍān was once prescribed as a religious duty for the Christians, just as it is prescribed for us, but they transferred it to the season of Lent.[137] As their pretext for making this change, they complained that they sometimes had to fast during the intense heat of midsummer. They began by counting it as thirty days, but then along came another generation to take their place, and these newcomers acquired a great deal of confidence in themselves, so they fasted for an extra day before the thirty, and for another extra day thereafter. Then each subsequent generation would invariably follow the example set by the generation before them, until they had extended the period of fasting to a total of fifty days."

Well then, fasting is indeed prescribed, as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said, even as it was prescribed for those before you:

in order that you may practice true devotion. (2:183)	*laʿalla-kum tattaqūn.*

That is to say, in order that you may practice detachment from eating, drinking, and engaging in sexual intercourse.

The experts in Qurʾānic exegesis *[ahl at-tafsīr]* have also provided us with the following historical background information:

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[135] Abu 'l-Ḥajjāj Mujāhid ibn Jabr al-Makkī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a *Tābiʿī* [member of the generation following that of the Companions] and a disciple of Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father). By the time of his death, in A.H. 104, he had come to be regarded as one of the most outstanding scholars in the fields of Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]* and Qurʾānic exegesis *[tafsīr]*.

[136] See p. 55 above.

[137] The term Lent has come down from Middle English (12th to 15th centuries), in which "lente" was the word meaning "springtime."

"Allāh (Exalted is He) made it incumbent upon His Messenger, Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and upon all the true believers *[mu'minīn]*, to fast on the Day of 'Āshūrā'[138] and on three days out of every month. This injunction was delivered to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) when he arrived at Medina [at the time of the Hijra, the Migration from Mecca]. So they made it their regular practice to observe these fasts, until [the Qur'ānic injunction concerning] the duty to fast in the month of Ramaḍān was revealed, one month and several days before the battle of Badr took place."[139]

Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

> [Fast] a certain number of days. (2:184) *ayyāman ma'dūdāt.*

What this signifies is that the month of Ramaḍān may last for thirty days, or for only twenty-nine days.

According to traditional report, Sa'īd ibn 'Amr ibn Sa'īd ibn al-'Āṣ once heard Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him, and with his father) relating that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had said:

I and my Community *[Ummatī]* are simple folk without much formal education *[ummiyya]*. We do not make elaborate calculations, nor do we make a written record of the month, like so, and like so, and like so, in order to arrive at the total of thirty.[140]

In Arabic, the lunar month is called *shahr*, because of its conspicuous nature *[shuhra]*. The words *shahr* and *shuhra* are both derived from the root *sh-h-r*, which conveys the basic idea of "clear visibility." Verbs from the same root are used in several idiomatic expressions, such as *shahartu 's-saif* [I have unsheathed the sword], and *shahara 'l-hilāl* [the new moon has come into view].

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[138] See pp. 278–94 below.

[139] The battle of Badr, in which the Muslims won an important victory over the unbelievers of Quraish, was fought during the month of Ramaḍān in the second year of the Hijra.

[140] There is no need for such calculations and written records, of course, when the beginning and end of the period of fasting is determined by the appearance of the new moon, rather than by human arithmetic.

On the diverse opinions held by various experts concerning the significance of the term "Ramaḍān," as it is used by Allāh (Exalted is He) in the Qur'ān.

The experts have failed to agree on the significance of the term "Ramaḍān,"[141] as it is used by Allāh (Exalted is He) in the Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*:[142]

[The time of fasting is] the month of Ramaḍān, in which the Qur'ān was sent down. (2:185)	*shahru Ramaḍāna 'lladhī unzila fī-hi 'l-Qur'ānu.*

Some of those experts have declared: "'Ramaḍān' is one of the Names of Allāh (Exalted is He). This is why it is called 'the month of Ramaḍān,' just as Rajab is referred to as 'the quiet month of Allāh *[shahru'llāh al-aṣamm]*,'[143] and 'the worshipful servant of Allāh *['abdu'llāh]*.'"

From one traditional report, transmitted by Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq[144] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) on the authority of his father and his grandfathers (may Allāh be well pleased with them all), we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The month of Ramaḍān is Allāh's month.

It was Anas ibn Mālik [145] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

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[141] In the Arabic script, there is no distinction corresponding to that which exists between 'upper case' and 'lower case' in scripts derived from the Roman alphabet. This fact deserves emphatic repetition here, as a reminder that the Arabic spelling alone provides no clue as to whether a given word is a 'proper' noun or name, or merely a 'common' noun. (In certain scholarly journals, for this very reason, no capitalized letters whatsoever are used in the transliteration of Arabic texts, not even for the names of people and places.)

[142] The month of Ramaḍān is the only month of the year to be mentioned by name in the entire Qur'ān, and this is the only Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* in which Allāh (Exalted is He) uses the term *Ramaḍān*.

[143] See p. 11 above.

[144] See note 125 on p. 70 above.

[145] See note 35 on p. 24 above.

> Do not say "Ramadān" [as an independent unit within a sentence]. You must always use it as part of a particular grammatically construct phrase, just as Allāh (Exalted is He) has used it in the Qur'ān, for He has said:
>
> the month of Ramadān. (2:185) *shahru Ramaḍāna*.

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted by al-Asma'ī, Abū 'Amr once said: "It came to be called 'Ramadān' for the simple reason that young camels, newly weaned from their mothers, were so badly scorched *[ramiḍat al-fiṣāl]* [146] by the heat in the course of this month."[147]

Other authorities have maintained: "[It came to be called 'Ramadān'] because, in the course of this month, the rocks and stones of the desert terrain would be scorched *[tarmaḍu]* by the blistering heat. The [closely related] term *ramḍā'* is used as a collective noun, meaning "rocks and stones that have been rendered intensely hot."

Yet others have said: "It was given the name 'Ramadān' because it has a scorching effect upon sins *[yarmiḍu 'dh-dhunūb]*." That is to say, it burns sins away. This explanation has also been attributed to the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[146] Like the noun *Ramaḍān*, the passive verb *ramiḍa* is derived from the triconsonantal root *r–m–ḍ*, which conveys the basic idea of "being scorched, intensely heated by the sun." According the the classical Arabic lexicographers, the expression *ramiḍat al-fiṣāl* means that the young camels, newly weaned from their mothers, "were affected by the heat of the sun from the ground, or stones, intensely heated thereby," or that they "were forced to lie down, in consequence of the intense heat of the sand, and the burning of their feet." (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *R–M–Ḍ*.)

[147] This explanation assumes that the month of Ramadān acquired its name during the historical period in which the calendar used by the people of Arabia was based on the solar year, so that Ramadān always coincided with the height of the summer season, when the desert heat was extremely intense.

As noted by Thomas Patrick Hughes (*Dictionary of Islam*, art. YEAR): "The ancient Arabian year is supposed to have consisted of twelve lunar months . . . , but about the year 412 C.E., the Arabians introduced a system of intercalation, whereby one month was intercalated into every three years." This system of intercalation was eventually abolished, and the lunar year reinstated, near the end of the Prophet's life on earth (Allāh bless him and give him peace). According to a report transmitted by Thawr ibn Yazīd, it was in the course of the sermon *[khuṭba]* he delivered during the Farewell Pilgrimage *[Ḥajjat al-Wadā']* that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) uttered the words:

> Time has swung around full circle, so that it is now divided according to the same calendrical pattern as on the day when Allāh created the heavens and the earth. The year has twelve months. . .

It has also been said: "Our hearts absorb a spiritual lesson from the heat [experienced while fasting], along with a reason to reflect on the state of the Hereafter, just as the sand and the stones absorb the effects of their exposure to the heat of the sun."

To quote the words of [the early philologist and lexicographer] al-Khalīl [ibn Aḥmad]:[148] "The etymological source from which 'Ramaḍān' is derived is *ar-ramad*, the Arabic term for a rain that arrives in the autumn. This month is therefore called 'Ramaḍān' because it washes the sins away from our physical bodies, and also causes our hearts to experience a process of purification."

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[148] According to Sir Hamilton Gibb: "The first systematic expositions [of Arabic philology] were made by al-Khalīl (d. 791),* an Arab from Oman. On the basis of ancient poetry, he worked out a complex metrical theory which has never been superseded, and he made the first attempt to compile a dictionary, arranged not in any of the various alphabetic orders adopted in later Arabic lexicons, but according to a phonetic scheme in which Indian influences have been suspected." (H.A.R. Gibb, *Arabic Literature*, Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 53.) The title of al-Khalīl's lexicon is *Kitāb al-'Ain* (because the first words listed in it were those beginning with the letter *'ain*). *In Arabic sources, his death is variously reported as A.H. 160 or 170 or 175.

Concerning various interpretations of the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The month of Ramaḍān, in which the Qurʾān was sent down. (2:185)
shahru Ramaḍāna 'lladhī unzila fī-hi 'l-Qurʾānu.

According to a traditional report, ʿAtiyya ibn al-Aswad once had a question [concerning this revelation] to put to Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), so he said:

"It seems that some uncertainty has arisen concerning His words (Exalted is He):

We have sent it down	*innā anzalnā-hu*
on a blessed night. (44:3)	*fī lailatin mubārakatin.*

"This uncertainty is due to the fact that [portions of] the Qurʾān are known to have been sent down during other months, [and not only on one blessed night in the month of Ramaḍān].[149] Indeed, Allāh Himself (Exalted is He) has said:

And [it is] a Qurʾān that We	*wa Qurʾānan faraqnā-hu*
have divided, so that you may	*li-taqraʾa-hu*
recite it to the people at intervals.	*ʿala 'n-nāsi ʿalā mukthin.*
(17:106)"	

Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) responded to this by telling him:

"The Qurʾān was sent down as a single whole, from the Well-Kept Tablet *[al-Lawh al-Mahfūz]*, on the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* in the month of Ramaḍān. It was thereupon installed in the House of Glory *[Bait al-ʿIzza]* in the heaven of this lower world. Then Gabriel (peace be upon him) brought it down and revealed it to the Prophet

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[149] On p. 60 above, we are informed that:

According to Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and his father) ... the "blessed night" (44:3) is the night of mid-Shaʿbān, which is the Night of Absolution.

(Allāh bless him and give him peace) in a series of installments *[nujūman nujūmā]*,[150] over the course of twenty-three years. Such, in fact, is the meaning conveyed by the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), in the first of the following verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān:

Oh no! I swear by the setting-places of the stars—[151]	*fa-lā uqsimu* *bi-mawāqi'i 'n-nujūm:*
and that is a tremendous oath, if you did but know—	*wa inna-hu la-qasamun* *law ta'lamūna 'aẓīm:*
that it is indeed a noble Qur'ān,	*inna-hu la-Qur'ānun karīm:*
in a Book kept hidden,	*fī Kitābin maknūn:*
which none shall touch except the purified,	*lā yamassu-hu* *illa 'l-muṭahharūn:*
a revelation from the Lord of the Worlds. (56:75–80)"	*tanzīlun min* *Rabbi 'l-'Ālamīn.*

Dāwūd ibn Abī Hind told someone he knew: "I once asked ash-Sha'bī: 'Was it only in the month of Ramaḍān that the Qur'ān was sent down? Was it not also sent down to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) at various times during the rest of the year?' He answered my question by saying: 'Oh yes, but the way it happened was this: Gabriel (peace be upon him) used to convey to Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in Ramaḍān, the revelation sent down by Allāh. Then Allāh would then emphasize whatever He wished, fix whatever He wished in his memory, and cause him to forget whatever He wished.'"

According to a traditional report, transmitted by Shihāb on the authority of Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī[152] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

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[150] While the primary signification of the Arabic word *najm* (of which *nujūm* is the plural form) is "star, celestial body, constellation," it can also mean "installment."

[151] This may fairly be described as a cautiously conservative translation of *bi-mawāqi'i 'n-nujūm*, in that it adheres to the interpretation reflected in the renderings adopted by M. M. Pickthall ("the places of the stars"), A. Yusuf Ali ("the setting of the stars"), and A. J. Arberry ("the fallings of the stars"). Maulana Muhammad Ali represents a sharp contrast, since he embraces with positive enthusiasm the interpretation attributed above to Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), and sees no reason to hesitate in offering the translation:

> But nay, I swear by revelation of portions (of the Qur'ān)!

In a footnote, Maulana Muhammad Ali justifies this rendering with the statement: "The meaning adopted is in consonance with the context.... *Mawāqi'* is the plural of *mauqi'*, i.e., *the time or place of the coming down of a thing*, which is the revelation of the Qur'ān in this case."

[152] See note 23 on p. 18 above.

> The Scrolls of Abraham *[Ṣuḥuf Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) were sent down on the third day of the month of Ramaḍān. The Torah of Moses *[Taurāt Mūsā]* (peace be upon him) was sent down on the sixth day of the month of Ramaḍān. The Psalms of David *[Zabūr Dāwūd]* (peace be upon him) were sent down on the eighteenth day of the month of Ramaḍān. The Gospel of Jesus *[Injīl ʿĪsā]* (peace be upon him) was sent down on the thirteenth day of the month of Ramaḍān. As for the Criterion *[al-Furqān]* [i.e., the Qurʾān,] it was sent down to Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) on the twenty-fourth of the month of Ramaḍān.

Next, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has provided a description of the Qurʾān, for He has told us that it is:

A guidance for mankind,	*hudan li'n-nāsi*
and clear proofs of the guidance,	*wa bayyinātin mina 'l-hudā*
and the Criterion. (2:185)	*wa 'l-Furqān.*

As a guidance for mankind, it shows the way out of error. The clear proofs of the guidance are indisputable evidence of that which is lawful *[ḥalāl]* and that which is unlawful, of the restrictive statutes *[ḥudūd]*[153] and the rules of law *[aḥkām]*. The Criterion *[Furqān]* draws the distinction between the true *[ḥaqq]* and the false *[bāṭil]*.

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[153] In the terminology of Islamic law, *ḥudūd* can also mean "the penalties prescribed for those who trespass beyond the legal limits." The specific punishments prescribed by Islamic law *[ḥudūd*, plural of *ḥadd]*, and the offences for which they are prescribed, are as follows: (1) For *zinā* in the sense of adultery: stoning *[rajm]*. (2) For *zinā* in the sense of fornication: one hundred lashes. (3) For *qadhf* [falsely accusing a married person of adultery]: eighty lashes. (4) For apostasy *[irtidād]*: death. (5) For drinking intoxicating beverages *[shurb]*: eighty lashes. (6) For theft *[sariqa]*: amputation of the right hand. (7) For highway robbery *[qaṭʿ aṭ-ṭarīq]*: (a) amputation of hands and feet (for robbery only) or (b) death by the sword or crucifixion (for robbery with murder).

Concerning the excellent qualities that are peculiar to the month of Ramaḍān.

Shaikh Abū Nasr [Muhammad ibn al-Bannā’] has informed us, on good traditional authority,[154] that Salmān [al-Fārisī][155] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) delivered a sermon for our benefit on the last day of Sha‘bān,[156] and this is what he told us:

> O people, a mighty month has cast its protective shade to screen you. A blessed month, a month in which there is a night that is better than a thousand months! Allāh has made keeping the fast therein *[siyāma-hu]* an obligatory religious duty *[farīda]*, and the observance of night vigil therein *[qiyām laili-hi]* a voluntary practice *[tatawwu‘]*. If someone seeks to draw near [to the Lord] therein by setting just one example of good conduct, or performs just one religious obligation, that person will be exactly the same as someone who discharges seventy religious obligations during all the other months of the year.
>
> It is the month of patient endurance *[sabr]*, and the reward for patient endurance is the Garden of Paradise. It is the month of charitable sharing *[muwāsāt]*, and it is the month in which the sustenance of the true believer *[mu’min]* is increased. So, if someone provides a breakfast meal for a person who is keeping the fast, this will result in forgiveness for his sins, and in his emancipation from the Fire of Hell. The benefactor will also be granted a reward equivalent to that earned by the recipient of his generosity, but without anything at all being deducted from the reward due to the latter.

"'Not all of us can find what it takes to provide a breakfast meal for someone who is keeping the fast,' said those who were listening to his sermon, but the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) went on to say:

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[154] ***Author's note:*** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā’ cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father [Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Ahmad ibn ‘Abdi’llāh ibn al-Bannā’]—Ibn al-Fāris—Abū Hāmid Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Jalūdī an-Nīsābūrī—Muhammad ibn Ishāq ibn Khuzaima—‘Alī ibn Hajar as-Sa‘dī—Yūsuf ibn Ziyād—Hammām ibn Yahyā—‘Alī ibn Zaid ibn Ja‘dān—Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyib—Salmān [al-Fārisī] (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[155] See note 39 on p. 26 above.

[156] The last day of the month of Sha‘bān is immediately followed by the first day of the month of Ramaḍān.

> Allāh will grant this reward to anyone who gives some kind of breakfast nourishment to a person who is keeping the fast, even if it is merely a dried date, a drink of water, or a cup of diluted milk.
>
> It is a month the beginning of which is a mercy, the middle of which is a forgiveness, and the last part of which is a deliverance from the Fire of Hell. So, if a slaveholder lightens the burden borne by his slave in this month, Allāh will forgive him and grant him freedom from the Fire of Hell.
>
> During the course of this month, you must therefore cultivate four practices, and repeat them frequently. Two of these are practices by which you will earn your Lord's good pleasure, while the other two are practices that you simply cannot afford to do without. As for the two practices by which you will earn your Lord's good pleasure, they are testifying that there is no god except Allāh *[shahādat an lā ilāha illa 'llāh]* and begging Him for forgiveness. As for the two that you simply cannot afford to do without, they are imploring Allāh to grant you the Garden of Paradise, and taking refuge with Him from the Fire of Hell.[157]
>
> Furthermore, if someone provides a satisfying breakfast meal, in the course of this month, for a person who is keeping the fast, Allāh (Exalted is He) will give the benefactor a drink from my Basin *[Ḥawḍ]*, after which he will never feel thirsty again."[158]

According to a traditional report transmitted by al-Kalbī, on the authority of Abū Nadra, it was Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī[159] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The gates of the Garden of Paradise and the gates of heaven will surely be flung open on the first night of the month of Ramaḍān, and they will not be closed again until the very last night thereof. Each time, without fail, that a male or female servant [of the Lord] performs the ritual prayer *[yuṣallī]* during any night of this month, Allāh will credit him or her with seventeen hundred good deeds for every act of prostration *[sajda]*. For that servant, He will build in the Garden of Paradise a house, made from a single red ruby, that has seventy doors. Each of those doors will have two leaves of gold, beautifully adorned with knobs fashioned from red ruby.
>
> If someone keeps the fast on the first day of the month of Ramaḍān, Allāh will forgive him every sin until the last day of Ramaḍān, and his fasting will be an

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[157] For traditional invocations of Divine refuge and protection, see Vol. 1, pp. 15, 85, 88, 106 and 338, and Vol. 2, pp. 42–43.

[158] In Vol. 1, pp. 237–38, Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has devoted a lengthy subsection to the subject of the Basin of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[159] Abū Saʿīd Saʿd ibn Mālik ibn Sinān al-Khudrī al-Anṣārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was a Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and a famous narrator of Tradition. He died in A.H. 74 or, according to some reports, in A.H. 63–64.

From another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a maidservant or a manservant [belonging to the inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise] were ever to emerge into this lower world, all the people of this world would surely engage in mortal combat over her or him, until they were all extinct. And if the maidens of Paradise, with eyes so fair *[al-ḥūr al-ʿīn]*,[392] were ever to let their locks of hair trail down upon the earth, the light of the sun would be extinguished, because of their vastly brighter radiance.

Someone once asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, how great is the contrast [in the Garden of Paradise] between the manservant *[khādim]*, on the one hand, and the man who is served as a master *[makhdūm]*, on the other?" To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> By the One in whose Hand my soul is held, the distinction [in the Garden of Paradise] between the manservant *[khādim]*, on the one hand, and the man who is served as a master *[makhdūm]*, on the other, is like the stars that are almost too faint to be visible, in contrast to the moon at the halfway point [i.e., in the middle of the month, when it is at the full].[393]

Let us now resume our description of the state of bliss enjoyed by that inhabitant of the Garden of Paradise:

While he is sitting there upon his thronelike couch *[sarīr]*, lo and behold, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will send him an angel, bearing seventy fine articles of clothing, each of a different kind. These gifts will be tucked out of sight between the two fingers of the angel, who will also be conveying the salutation of peace and contentment. On reaching the door of the man's abode, the angel will come to a halt, saying to the doorkeeper: "Permit me to enter the presence of Allāh's saintly friend *[walī]*, for I come to him as the Messenger of the Lord of All the Worlds." The doorkeeper will say in response: "By Allāh, I do not possess the authority to converse with him directly. Nevertheless, I shall mention you to my immediate superiors among the doorkeeping inside a pavilion made from a single hollowed pearl. This fits the description given by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

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[392] See note 333 on p. 241 above.

[393] From the general context of this passage, it seems safe to assume that the contrast referred to here—first by the anonymous questioner and then by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)—is one that exists in the Garden of Paradise, although this is not explicitly stated in either case. To confirm the assumption, we may adduce the rather similar traditional report (cited on p. 285 above) from which we learn, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also used to say:

> The handsomeness of the true specimen of manhood *[rajul]*, in contrast to the handsomeness of the manservant *[khādim]* among the people of the Garden of Paradise, is like [the brilliance of] the moon on the night when it is full, in contrast to [the fainter brilliance of] the stars.

Fair maids, close-guarded	***ḥūrun maqṣūrātun***
in pavilions. (55:72)	***fi 'l-khiyām.***

Every woman amongst them will be dressed in seventy fine articles of clothing, no item being the same as any other. She will be given seventy kinds of perfume, none with the same fragrance as any other. She will also be given seventy thronelike raised couches, made from a red ruby studded with pearls. Upon each of these couches there will be seventy cushions, and over every cushion there will be a canopy. Every woman will have seventy thousand pageboys to attend to her own needs, as well as seventy thousand maidservants to attend to the needs of her husband. Each of these maidservants will carry a dish made of gold, containing some kind of cooked food, the last morsel of which will be found to have a delicious flavor that went unnoticed in the first bite. Her husband will be given special treats like this, as he reclines upon a couch made from red ruby. Such will be his reward for every day on which he has kept the fast of Ramaḍān, quite apart from what he may have earned by performing charitable deeds!

◆

Several traditional reports, including descriptions of how the month of Ramaḍān will be experienced by the inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise.

Shaikh Abū Naṣr [Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā'] has also informed me, on good traditional authority,[164] that Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once heard these words being uttered by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The Garden of Paradise will surely be refurnished and redecorated from year to year, with the advent of the month of Ramaḍān. As soon as the first night of the month of Ramaḍān has arrived, a wind called the Whirlwind *[al-Muthīra]* will blow from beneath the Heavenly Throne *[al-'Arsh]*. The leaves *[awrāq]* of the trees of the Garden of Paradise will be set in a state of commotion, and the rings on the leaves *[maṣārī']* of the doors will be shaken and rattled. This will give rise to a rustling and tinkling sound, far more beautiful than anything the listeners ever heard ringing in their ears before.
>
> The brides of Paradise, those maidens with such lovely eyes *[al-ḥūr al-'īn]*,[165] will be splendidly adorned, until they are ready to stand in the midst of the most nobly distinguished company in the Garden of Paradise. They will then call out the invitation: "Is any suitor ready to present his suit to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), so that He may marry him [to one of us]?" Then they will turn to Riḍwān [the angelic custodian of the Garden of Paradise][166] and ask him: "What night is this?" Displaying an eager willingness to be of service *[talbiya]*,[167]

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[164] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father [Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā']—Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad [al-Ḥāfiẓ]—'Abdu'llāh ibn Muḥammad—Abu 'l-Qāsim ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn Muḥammad—al-Ḥasan ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Yasār and Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥārith—Salama ibn Shubaib—al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad—Hishām ibn al-Walīd—Ḥammād ibn Sulaimān ad-Dawsī—al-Ḥasan—aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn al-Muzāḥim—Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[165] See note 42 on p. 26 above.

[166] As an ordinary noun, the Arabic word *riḍwān* means "approval, consent, good pleasure." In the standard works of reference, the angel called Riḍwān is variously described as the porter, the gardener, the doorkeeper, the keeper, the guardian, the treasurer, or the custodian of Paradise.

[167] The term *talbiya* [(the expression of) willing compliance] is the verbal noun corresponding to the declaration "*Labbaik!*" which signifies: "Here I am, doubly at your service!" or, "I wait intent upon your service, time and time again." The Arabic use of the dual form (indicated by the word "doubly" in English translation) may also imply the meaning "inwardly and outwardly."

> he will respond to their question by saying: "O lovely good ladies, this is the first night of the month of Ramaḍān, the night when the gates of the Garden of Paradise are opened for the sake of those members of the Community *[Umma]* of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who are keeping the fast."
>
> In confirmation of these words, Allāh (Exalted is He) will promptly say: "O Riḍwān, open the gates of all the Gardens of Paradise! O Mālik,[108] shut the doors of the Blazing Fire of Hell *[Jaḥīm]*, to keep out those members of the Community *[Umma]* of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who are keeping the fast. O Gabriel, go down to the earth below, shackle the defiant and rebellious devils *[marada ash-shayāṭīn]*, and tie them up securely with fetters and chains. Then cast them into the deepest depths of the oceans, so that they cannot meddle with the Community of My beloved friend *[ḥabībī]*, Muhammad, and spoil their experience of fasting."

According to this same report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then went on to say:

> On each and every night of the month of Ramaḍān, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will say three times: "Does anyone have a request to make, so that I may grant his request? Is there anyone who wishes to repent, so that I may relent toward him and accept his repentance? Is there anyone wishing to seek forgiveness, so that I may forgive him? Who would make a loan to a rich man, as opposed to one who is impoverished, and to a person who is fully in control of his affairs, as opposed to one who is the victim of injustice?"

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued further:

> On each and every day of the month of Ramaḍān, by the time when the fast is duly broken *[ifṭār]*, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will have delivered a million of His servants from the Fire of Hell, even though all of them had incurred the penalty of damnation. Moreover, when the night of the Day of Congregation *[Jum'a]* comes around, and on the Day of Congregation itself, it will be during every single hour that Allāh (Exalted is He) delivers a million of His servants from the Fire of Hell, even though all of them had incurred the penalty of damnation. As for what will happen on the last day of the month of Ramaḍān, on that day Allāh will deliver a number equal to the total of all those He has delivered between the first of the month and the last.
>
> As soon as the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* has arrived, Allāh (Exalted is He) will give the order to Gabriel (peace be upon him), who will promptly descend to the earth below, traveling in a throng of angels and bearing a green banner, which he will set up on top of the Ka'ba. Gabriel (peace be upon him) has no fewer than six hundred wings, which he only unfolds on the Night of Power

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[108] As an ordinary adjectival noun, the Arabic word *mālik* means "one who exercises control." The angel Mālik is charged with the custody of Hell and the supervision of its inmates, as they suffer the torments of damnation. Unlike Riḍwān, his counterpart in Paradise, Mālik is mentioned by name in the Qur'ān, where Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

And they shall cry out: "O Mālik, let your Lord make an end of us!" But he will say: "Here you must surely remain." (43:77)	*wa nādaw yā Māliku li-yaqḍi 'alai-nā Rabbu-k. qāla inna-kum mākithūn.*

> *[Lailat al-Qadr].* He will therefore spread them on that night, and, by so doing, he will span the entire distance between the East and the West. Gabriel (peace be upon him) will command the angels to infiltrate into this Community *[Umma]*, so they will insert themselves unobtrusively among its members. They will then give the greeting of peace to every believer who is found to be observing the night vigil *[qā'im]*, performing the ritual prayer *[muṣallī]*, and practicing the remembrance of Allāh *[dhākir]*. They will exchange greetings with them, and say "*āmīn*" to their prayers of supplication *[yu'amminūna 'alā du'ā'i-him]*, until the break of dawn.
>
> At this point, Gabriel (peace be upon him) will cry out: "O company of angelic friends *[yā ma'shar al-awliyā']*, now is the moment for us to be homeward bound!" But they will ask: "O Gabriel, what has Allāh done to meet the needs of the believers *[mu'minīn]* belonging to the Community of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace)?" So he will respond to this by saying: "Allāh (Exalted is He) has scrutinized them carefully, and He has pardoned and forgiven them all, with only four exceptions."

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was quick to explain:

> These are the four exceptions: Anyone who is addicted to intoxicating liquor *[mudmin khamr]*; anyone who is disobedient and disrespectful toward his parents *['āqq wālidai-hi]*; anyone who is guilty of disrupting a bond of kinship *[qāṭi' raḥim]*; and anyone who is virulently rancorous *[mushāḥin]*.

When people asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, what kind of a person is the *mushāḥin* [virulently rancorous individual]?" he replied: "Someone who is *muṣārim* [spitefully reluctant to abandon a grudge, and stubbornly unwilling to accept the restoration of good relations with anyone who has offended him]."[169] He then went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> When the month of Ramaḍān is over, and the night of the [Festival of] Fast Breaking *[al-Fiṭr]* has arrived, that night is called the Night of the Prize *[Lailat al-Jā'iza]*. Then, in the early morning of the [Festival of] Fast Breaking, Allāh (Exalted is He) will send His angels forth to visit all the towns and cities on the earth below. Once they have made their descent, they will position themselves at the entrances to all the streets and alleys. There, in a voice that is audible to every being created by Allāh (Exalted is He), apart from the jinn and humankind, they will issue a proclamation, saying: "O Community of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), come forth into the presence of a Noble and Generous Lord *[Rabb Karīm]*, who will grant you gifts in abundance, and forgive your terrible sin!"

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[169] In later centuries, when the proliferation of sectarian movements increasingly threatened to dismember the Community, defenders of the orthodox tradition of Islām would seize upon this saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), interpreting the word *mushāḥin* to mean "virulently and aggressively schismatic."

> Then, when the believers have emerged and presented themselves at their place of prayer *[muṣallā]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will say to His angels: "O My angels, what is the recompense of the hired laborer, once he has done his job?"

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued:

> The angels will reply: "Our God *[Ilāh]* and our Master *[Sayyid]*, You will pay him his wages in full!" So He will say: "I now call upon you to bear witness, O My angels, that I have conferred My acceptance and My forgiveness, as the reward for their fasting *[ṣiyām]* and night vigil *[qiyām]* during the month of Ramaḍān."

> Then He will say: "O My human servants, put your requests to Me now, for this I swear, by My Might and My Majesty: You will not ask Me this day, in this gathering of yours, for anything connected with your life hereafter, without My granting it to you, nor for anything connected with your life in this lower world, without My attending to your need. By My Might and My Majesty, I will surely condone the false steps you make, as long as you are consciously alert in the effort to avoid incurring My displeasure. By My Might and My Majesty, I will not put you to shame, nor will I expose you to disgrace amongst those who are faithfully committed to observing the statutes *[ḥudūd]*.[170] Now you may depart, knowing that you have been forgiven. You have won My approval, and I am well pleased with you."

This traditional report[171] concludes with the following words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The angels will then be very happy, as they welcome the good news of all that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will bestow upon this Community, when its members break the fast they have kept through the month of Ramaḍān.

Shaikh Abū Naṣr [Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā'] has also informed me, on good traditional authority,[172] that Abū Mas'ūd al-Ghifārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that he had heard the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say, on the day when the appearance of the new moon marked the beginning of the month of Ramaḍān:[173]

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[170] See note 153 on p. 83 above.

[171] **Author's note**: A similar traditional report, with a close correspondence in the actual wording, has come down to us through a different chain of transmission, although the earliest links are the same, namely: **ad-Daḥḥāk ibn al-Muzāḥim—Ibn 'Abbās** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)**—the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[172] **Author's note**: Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **His own father [Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā']—Nāfi'—Abū Mas'ūd al-Ghifārī** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)**—the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[173] With certain differences in the wording, as well as some omissions and several additions, most elements of this traditional report are included in two such reports already cited in this Discourse (see pp. 86–88 above). The mention of the Khuzā'a tribesman is the one ingredient that does not occur in either of the other two reports.

> *[Lailat al-Qadr].* He will therefore spread them on that night, and, by so doing, he will span the entire distance between the East and the West. Gabriel (peace be upon him) will command the angels to infiltrate into this Community *[Umma]*, so they will insert themselves unobtrusively among its members. They will then give the greeting of peace to every believer who is found to be observing the night vigil *[qā'im]*, performing the ritual prayer *[muṣallī]*, and practicing the remembrance of Allāh *[dhākir]*. They will exchange greetings with them, and say "*āmīn*" to their prayers of supplication *[yu'amminūna 'alā du'ā'i-him]*, until the break of dawn.
>
> At this point, Gabriel (peace be upon him) will cry out: "O company of angelic friends *[yā ma'shar al-awliyā']*, now is the moment for us to be homeward bound!" But they will ask: "O Gabriel, what has Allāh done to meet the needs of the believers *[mu'minīn]* belonging to the Community of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace)?" So he will respond to this by saying: "Allāh (Exalted is He) has scrutinized them carefully, and He has pardoned and forgiven them all, with only four exceptions."

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> These are the four exceptions: Anyone who is addicted to intoxicating liquor *[mudmin khamr]*; anyone who is disobedient and disrespectful toward his parents *['āqq wālidai-hi]*; anyone who is guilty of disrupting a bond of kinship *[qāṭi' raḥim]*; and anyone who is virulently rancorous *[mushāḥin]*.

When people asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, what kind of a person is the *mushāḥin* [virulently rancorous individual]?" he replied: "Someone who is *musārim* [spitefully reluctant to abandon a grudge, and stubbornly unwilling to accept the restoration of good relations with anyone who has offended him]."[169] He then went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> When the month of Ramaḍān is over, and the night of the [Festival of] Fast Breaking *[al-Fiṭr]* has arrived, that night is called the Night of the Prize *[Lailat al-Jā'iza]*. Then, in the early morning of the [Festival of] Fast Breaking, Allāh (Exalted is He) will send His angels forth to visit all the towns and cities on the earth below. Once they have made their descent, they will position themselves at the entrances to all the streets and alleys. There, in a voice that is audible to every being created by Allāh (Exalted is He), apart from the jinn and humankind, they will issue a proclamation, saying: "O Community of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), come forth into the presence of a Noble and Generous Lord *[Rabb Karīm]*, who will grant you gifts in abundance, and forgive your terrible sin!"

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[169] In later centuries, when the proliferation of sectarian movements increasingly threatened to dismember the Community, defenders of the orthodox tradition of Islām would seize upon this saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), interpreting the word *mushāḥin* to mean "virulently and aggressively schismatic."

the authority of Anas ibn Mālik [176] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> As soon as the first night of the month of Ramaḍān has arrived, the All-Majestic One *[al-Jalīl]* (Magnificent is His Glory) will summon Riḍwān, the keeper *[khāzin]*[177] of the Garden of Paradise. The ever-obedient Riḍwān will present himself at once, saying: "I wait intent upon Your service, time and time again, and upon aiding Your cause, time and time again *[labbaika wa sa'daik]*!"[178] The Lord will then tell him: "You must refurnish and redecorate My Garden of Paradise, for the sake of those members of the Community *[Umma]* of Aḥmad who are keeping the fast.
>
> Next, He will summon Mālik,[179] the keeper *[khāzin]* of the Fire of Hell, with the call: "O Mālik!" The ever-obedient Mālik will present himself at once, saying: "I wait intent upon Your service, time and time again, and upon aiding Your cause, time and time again *[labbaika wa sa'daik]*!" The Lord will then tell him: "Shut the doors of the blazing Fire of Hell *[Jaḥīm]*, so as to lock out those members of the Community *[Umma]* of Aḥmad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who are keeping the fast. Then do not reopen those doors to them until they have completed their month of fasting."
>
> At this point, He will summon Gabriel (peace be upon him), who will present himself at once, saying: "I wait intent upon Your service, time and time again, and upon aiding Your cause, time and time again *[labbaika wa sa'daik]*!" The Lord will then tell him: "You must go down to the earth below, in order to shackle the defiant and rebellious devils *[maradat ash-shayāṭīn]*, so that they cannot meddle with the Community of Aḥmad, and spoil their experience of fasting and breaking fast."
>
> On each and every day of the month of Ramaḍān, at the rising of the sun and also at the time of breaking fast *[ifṭār]*, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will have countless servants, male and female, delivered from damnation to the Fire of Hell.
>
> In each of the seven heavens, He has an angelic herald ever at the ready. One of these is an angel whose crest *['urf]* is just beneath the Throne of the Lord of All the Worlds *['Arsh Rabbi 'l-'Ālamīn]*, while the padded soles of his feet *[farāsin]* are planted on the farthest edges of the seventh and lowest earth. He has one wing in the East, and one wing in the West. Adorned with a diadem of corals, pearls and gems, he will proclaim [on behalf of his Lord]: "Is there anyone ready to repent, so that his repentance may be accepted? Is there anyone ready to make a plea, so that his request may be answered? Is there anyone suffering injustice, so that Allāh may come to his aid? Is there anyone seeking forgiveness, so that Allāh may forgive him? Is there anyone with a petition to make, so that his petition may be granted?"

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[176] See note 35 on p. 24 above.

[177] See note 166 on p. 88 above.

[178] See note 167 on p. 88 above.

[179] See note 168 on p. 89 above.

According to the same traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then went on to say:

> Throughout the entire month [of Ramaḍān], the Lord (Exalted is the Mention of His Name) will go on issuing this call: "My servants, men and women alike! Be of good cheer, be patient, and steadily persevere! I am about to grant you relief from trouble and pain, and you will shortly attain to My mercy and My generous favor."
>
> As soon as the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* has arrived, Gabriel (peace be upon him) will descend in the midst of a throng of angels. As they alight, they will pronounce benedictions upon every servant [of the Lord], who, whether standing erect or sitting down, is diligently engaged in the remembrance of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

According to another traditional report, also transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If Allāh were ever to allow the heavens and the earth to speak, they would surely greet those who keep the fast of Ramaḍān, hailing them with glad tidings of the Garden of Paradise.

According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted from 'Abdu'llāh ibn Abī Awfā (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The sleep of one who keeps the fast is an act of worshipful service *['ibāda]*, his silence is a declaration of the glory of the Lord *[tasbīḥ]*,[180] his prayer of supplication *[du'ā']* is sure to be accepted, and the merit of every good deed he performs is sure to be multiplied.

According to al-A'mash,[181] Abū Khaithama (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "They used to say: 'Ramaḍān in the case of Ramaḍān, the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* in the case of the Pilgrimage, the Day of Congregation *[Jum'a]* in the case of the Day of Congregation, and the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* in the case of the ritual prayer. These are sufficient in themselves as expiations *[kaffārāt]* for sins committed during their observance,[182] so long as the major sins *[kabā'ir]* are avoided.'"

As we learn from traditional reports, the Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Mu'minīn]*, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased

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[180] In other words, his silence is actually proclaiming: "*subḥāna'llāh* [Glory be to Allāh]!" (The term *tasbīḥ* is a verbal noun, derived from the same root—*s-b-ḥ*—as the word *subḥān*.)

[181] Abū Muḥammad al-A'mash Sulaimān ibn Mihrān al-Kūfī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a famous Qur'ān-reader and narrator of Prophetic tradition. He died ca. A.H. 148.

[182] In the words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), cited on pp. 85–86 above:

> If someone keeps the fast on the first day of the month of Ramaḍān, Allāh will forgive him every sin until the last day of Ramaḍān, and his fasting will be an expiation until that same point in time.

> shackles on his neck and iron fetters on his legs—and if his fellow creatures were then to catch sight of him, they would certainly flee from him and run as far away from him as they possibly could.

The traditional report continues:

> Due to the intensity of the heat of the Fire of Hell, its grievous affliction, the varied range of its torment, and the narrowness of its dwelling places, the fleshy parts of its inhabitants will turn green, their bones will split and crack, their brains will boil and pour down over their outer layers of skin. As their skin is burned away, their limbs will be cut off at the joints. Then, as the pus oozes out from their dismembered limbs, their bodies will come to be riddled with maggots and worms. Those maggots and worms will soon grow so fat that they come to resemble the wild ass. They will also develop claws, and those claws of theirs will be just like the talons of vultures and eagles. They will burrow into the areas between the outer skin and the flesh of their victims, and rip them to shreds. They will give out a moaning sound in the process, and they will scurry to and fro, just as a frightened wild animal scurries to and fro. They will eat their victims' flesh and drink their blood, for they have no other form of food and drink.
>
> The angels will come and seize those people, then drag them along with their faces down on the live coals and stones, which stick out from the ground as if they were teeth. They will keep dragging them along until they reach the ocean of Hell *[Jahannam]*. This means covering the distance of a journey taking seventy years, so they will not reach it until all their joints are broken, nor without having their skins stripped and replaced no fewer than seventy thousand times each day. When the angels finally bring them to their destination, they will hand them over to the keepers of the ocean of Hell, who will immediately grab them by their legs and shove them into it. No one knows the depth of that ocean, except the One who created it.

According to some accounts, the following description is recorded in one of the books of the Torah *[asfār at-Tawrāh]*:

> The ocean of this world, by comparison with the ocean of Hell, is like a small well on the shore of the ocean of this world. So, when they are thrown into it, and experience the first touch of the torment it has to offer, they will say to one another: "As it seems now, the torment inflicted upon us before this was actually a form of gentle clemency."

The traditional report continues:

> They will sink down once, before rising again to the surface. Then the ocean will boil, as it plunges them down to a depth of seventy fathoms. The distance of each fathom will be equivalent to the distance of the East from the West. Then the angels will herd them together with their goading irons, beating them with these sharp rods and driving them back down to the very bottom of the ocean, to the distance of a journey taking seventy years. Their only food and drink will be what the ocean provides, so they will rise back up from its lowest depth, covering the distance of a journey taking one hundred and forty years.

On the significance of each of the five letters in the word "Ramaḍān" [as that word is spelled in the Arabic script].

The word "Ramaḍān" [as written in the Arabic script] is made up of five letters, namely, *rā'*, *mīm*, *ḍād*, *alif* and *nūn*.[155] The initial letter *rā'* stands for *riḍwānu'llāh* [Allāh's good pleasure]. The letter *mīm* stands for *muḥābātu'llāh* [the considerate and favorable disposition of Allāh]. The letter *ḍād* stands for *ḍamānu'llāh* [Allāh's guarantee, meaning His assurance of spiritual reward]. The letter *alif* stands for *ulfatu'llāh* [the intimate affection and nearness of Allāh].[156] The final letter *nūn* stands for *nūru'llāh* [the radiant light of Allāh].[157]

This means that the month of Ramaḍān is the month of considerate behavior, the giving of assurance, the sharing of intimate affection, the shedding of light, the bestowal of benefits, and generous respect for the saints *[awliyā']* and the righteous *[abrār]*.

As someone once said: "In comparison with the other months, the status of Ramaḍān is like that of the heart within the breast, like that of the Prophets *[Anbiyā']* within the human race, and like that of the Sacred Territory of Mecca *[al-Ḥaram]* among the cities of the world.

"To clarify these points of comparison (in reverse order): The accursed False Messiah *[ad-Dajjāl]* will be denied access to the Sacred Territory of Mecca *[al-Ḥaram]*, just as the defiant and rebellious agents of Satan *[maradat ash-Shaiṭān]* are kept shackled and chained in the month of Ramadān.[108] [On the Day of Resurrection] the Prophets *[Anbiyā']* will be intercessors *[shufa'ā']* on behalf of those who are guilty of sinful offenses, just as the month of Ramadān will be an intercessor *[shafī']* on behalf of those who have kept the fast. The heart is beautified and adorned by spiritual experience *[ma'rifa]* and faith *[īmān]*, just as the month of Ramadān is beautified and adorned by the light of the recitation of the Qur'ān.

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[155] See note 141 on p. 78 above.

[156] In the Arabic script, an initial letter *alif* merely serves to indicate that the word concerned begins with a vowel. An extra sign is sometimes added to indicate whether that vowel is *a*, *i*, or *u*. When *alif* occurs between two consonants, however, (e.g., between the letters *ḍād* and *nūn* in the word *Ramaḍān*) it indicates the long vowel *ā*.

[157] In the Thirtieth Discourse of *The Removal of Cares [Jalā' al-Khawāṭir]*, the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has suggested the following explanations:

> The initial *rā'* stands for *raḥma* [mercy] and *ra'fa* [compassionate kindness]. The *mīm* stands for *mujāzāt* [recompense], *maḥabba* [loving affection] and *minna* [gracious favor]. The *ḍād* stands for *ḍamān* [guarantee], meaning the assurance of spiritual reward. The *alif* is the first letter of the Arabic word *ulfa*, meaning intimate affection and nearness. The final *nūn* stands for *nūr* [light] and *nawāl* [receiving benefit].

"If a person does not receive forgiveness in the month of Ramadān, in which month can he hope to have his sins forgiven? The servant [of the Lord] must therefore turn in repentance to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), before the doors of repentance *[tawba]* are locked and bolted. He must turn to Him (Almighty and Glorious is He) in repentance *[tawba]*, before the time for returning to obedience *[ināba]* has slipped away beyond recall.[109] Let him also weep, before the time for weeping and compassion *[rahma]* has expired.

"As the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> "'The members of my Community *[Ummati]* will not be put to shame, so long as they observe the night vigil during the month of Ramadān.'

"On hearing this, a man asked: 'O Prophet of Allāh, what does result in their being put to shame?' So he replied:

> "'If someone is guilty, during month of Ramadān, of violating a sacred ordinance *[mahram]*, of committing an evil deed, of drinking intoxicating liquor, or of committing adultery or fornication, [his fasting in] Ramadān will not be accepted of him. Allāh and His angels and all those who dwell in the heavens will curse him, and the curse will remain in effect until the same point of time in the year ahead. If he happens to die in the interval before the next Ramadān comes around, he will die without having even one good deed to his credit in the sight of Allāh.'"

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[108] See the traditional reports cited on p. 89 and p. 93 above. (In those reports, the expression *maradat ash-shayāṭīn* [defiant and rebellious devils] is used, rather than *maradat ash-Shaiṭān* [defiant and rebellious agents of Satan].)

[109] In certain contexts, the terms *tauba* and *ināba* are virtually synonymous, so "repentance" is often a satisfactory equivalent for either. Significant distinctions are sometimes drawn, however, as the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in Vol. 2, p. 201, where he tells us that, according to Abū 'Alī ad-Daqqāq (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him):

"Repentance has three parts or stages: (1) *tauba*, which is an initial stage, (2) *ināba*, which is an intermediate stage, and (3) *auba*, which is an ultimate stage. The term *tauba* applies to the repentance of one who repents because of the fear of punishment. The term *ināba* applies to the repentance of one who is motivated by the desire for reward or the dreadful prospect of chastisement. The term *auba* applies to the repentance of one who repents in deference to the Divine commandment, not because of the desire for reward or the fear of chastisement."

An anonymous saying, in which every sentence begins: "The chieftain *[sayyid]* of…is…."

As someone once said:

"The chieftain of the human race *[sayyid al-bashar]* is Adam (peace be upon him).

"The chieftain of the Arabs *[sayyid al-ʿArab]* is Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

"The chieftain of the Persians *[sayyid al-Furs]* is Salmān [al-Fārisī] (may Allāh be well pleased with him).[190]

"The chieftain of the Greeks *[sayyid ar-Rūm]* is Ṣuhaib [ar-Rūmī] (may Allāh be well pleased with him).[191]

"The chieftain of the Abyssinians *[sayyid al-Ḥabash]* is Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him).[192]

"The chieftain of the towns *[sayyid al-qurā]* is Mecca.

"The chieftain of the valleys *[sayyid al-awdiya]* is the valley of the Temple of Jerusalem *[wādī Bait al-Maqdis]*.[193]

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[190] See note 39 on p. 26 above .

[191] Ṣuhaib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was one of the very first to acknowledge the Mission of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and so to accept Islām. Although he was the son of Arab parents, he acquired the nickname "ar-Rūmī [the Greek]" because, while only a boy, he had been captured and enslaved by the Byzantine Greeks *[ar-Rūm]*.

[192] Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was the first muezzin *[mu'adhdhin]* appointed by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to summon the Muslim community to the five daily prayers. He was an Abyssinian slave who had been ransomed by Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[193] In Arabic, the Temple of Jerusalem is called either *Bait al-Maqdis* or *Bait al-Muqaddas*. In either case, the literal meaning is "the House of the Holy Land." (Faced with an Arabic text in which the spelling is simply *m–q–d–s*, with no marks to indicate vowels or doubled consonants, the translator can only guess at the reading originally preferred!)

the authority of Anas ibn Mālik[176] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> As soon as the first night of the month of Ramaḍān has arrived, the All-Majestic One *[al-Jalīl]* (Magnificent is His Glory) will summon Riḍwān, the keeper *[khāzin]*[177] of the Garden of Paradise. The ever-obedient Riḍwān will present himself at once, saying: "I wait intent upon Your service, time and time again, and upon aiding Your cause, time and time again *[labbaika wa sa'daik]*!"[178] The Lord will then tell him: "You must refurnish and redecorate My Garden of Paradise, for the sake of those members of the Community *[Umma]* of Aḥmad who are keeping the fast.
>
> Next, He will summon Mālik,[179] the keeper *[khāzin]* of the Fire of Hell, with the call: "O Mālik!" The ever-obedient Mālik will present himself at once, saying: "I wait intent upon Your service, time and time again, and upon aiding Your cause, time and time again *[labbaika wa sa'daik]*!" The Lord will then tell him: "Shut the doors of the blazing Fire of Hell *[Jaḥīm]*, so as to lock out those members of the Community *[Umma]* of Aḥmad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who are keeping the fast. Then do not reopen those doors to them until they have completed their month of fasting."
>
> At this point, He will summon Gabriel (peace be upon him), who will present himself at once, saying: "I wait intent upon Your service, time and time again, and upon aiding Your cause, time and time again *[labbaika wa sa'daik]*!" The Lord will then tell him: "You must go down to the earth below, in order to shackle the defiant and rebellious devils *[maradat ash-shayāṭīn]*, so that they cannot meddle with the Community of Aḥmad, and spoil their experience of fasting and breaking fast."
>
> On each and every day of the month of Ramaḍān, at the rising of the sun and also at the time of breaking fast *[ifṭār]*, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will have countless servants, male and female, delivered from damnation to the Fire of Hell.
>
> In each of the seven heavens, He has an angelic herald ever at the ready. One of these is an angel whose crest *['urf]* is just beneath the Throne of the Lord of All the Worlds *['Arsh Rabbi 'l-'Ālamīn]*, while the padded soles of his feet *[farāsin]* are planted on the farthest edges of the seventh and lowest earth. He has one wing in the East, and one wing in the West. Adorned with a diadem of corals, pearls and gems, he will proclaim [on behalf of his Lord]: "Is there anyone ready to repent, so that his repentance may be accepted? Is there anyone ready to make a plea, so that his request may be answered? Is there anyone suffering injustice, so that Allāh may come to his aid? Is there anyone seeking forgiveness, so that Allāh may forgive him? Is there anyone with a petition to make, so that his petition may be granted?"

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[176] See note 35 on p. 24 above.

[177] See note 166 on p. 88 above.

[178] See note 167 on p. 88 above.

[179] See note 168 on p. 89 above.

Concerning the excellent properties of the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*.

Let us now consider the significance of the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Behold, We sent it down on the Night of Power.	*innā anzalnā-hu* *fī Lailati 'l-Qadr.*
And what has made you know what is the Night of Power?	*wa mā adrā-ka* *mā Lailatu 'l-Qadr.*
The Night of Power is better than a thousand months.	*Lailatu 'l-Qadri khairun* *min alfi shahr.*
In it the angels and the Spirit come down by their Lord's permission, on every errand.	*tanazzalu 'l-malā'ikatu* *wa 'r-Rūḥu fī-hā* *bi-idhni Rabbi-him* *min kulli amr.*
Peace it is, until the rising of the of dawn. (97:1–5)	*salāmun hiya* *ḥattā maṭla'i 'l-fajr.*

First of all, we should note that the object pronoun *-hu* [it] in *anzalnā-hu* [We sent it down] is an allusion to the Qur'ān. Allāh (Exalted is He) sent it down from the Well-Kept Tablet *[al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfūẓ]* to the heaven of this lower world—to the Scribes *[as-Safara]*, they being the clerks or secretaries among the angels. It would thus come down on that particular night, from the Tablet, to the extent that Gabriel (peace be upon him) was to reveal it—with the permission of Allāh (Exalted is He)—to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in the course of the whole year. The same procedure would then be applied in each subsequent year, until the entire Qur'ān had come down, on the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* in the month of Ramadān, to the heaven of this lower world.

Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was offering an interpretation also proposed by other authorities, when he gave the following commentary on:

Behold, We sent it down	*innā anzalnā-hu*
on the Night of Power. (97:1)	*fī Lailati 'l-Qadr.*

"This means: 'We sent Gabriel down with this Sūra, and with the whole of the Qur'ān—on the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*]—to the recording angels. Then it came down after that, by installments [*najman najmā*], to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)—during a period of twenty-three years, and in all the months, days, nights, and moments of time.'"

As for His statement (Exalted is He):

on the Night of Power.	*fī Lailati 'l-Qadr.*

—this means: "on a tremendous or stupendous night [*laila 'aẓīma*]," or, as some have maintained: "on the Night of the Divine Decree [*Lailat al-Ḥukm*]." It is called the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] in order to proclaim the immensity of the night itself, and to emphasize its potency [*qadr*], because it is then that Allāh (Exalted is He) predetermines [*yuqaddiru*] how things are to be throughout the year, until the same night of the year that lies ahead.

Then He has said (Exalted is He):

And what has made you know	*wa mā adrā-ka*
what is the Night of Power? (97:2)	*mā Lailatu 'l-Qadr.*

In other words: "O Muhammad, if it were not for the fact that Allāh has made you realize its tremendous importance, [how could you have known]?" For the fact is that, in every instance where the question posed in the Qur'ān is in the past tense—"and what has made you know [*wa mā adrā-ka*]?"—Allāh had already imparted the relevant knowledge to him. On the other hand, whenever the question posed therein is in the future tense—"and what will make you know [*wa mā yudrī-ka*]?"—the implication is that He had not let him know, and had not imparted the relevant knowledge to him. For example, consider His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And what will make you know?	*wa mā yudrī-ka*
It may be that the Hour is near.	*la'alla 's-Sā'ata takūnu qarībā.*
(33:63)	

The timing of the Hour [of the Resurrection] had not become clear to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so he was asked: "and what will make you know *[wa mā yudrī-ka]* ?" rather than: "and what has made you know *[wa mā adrā-ka]*?"

The following point should also be noted, concerning the night which He has described (Exalted is He) as "the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*," that is to say, the Night of Sublime Majesty and Wisdom *[Lailat al-'Azama wa 'l-Ḥikma]*: According to some authorities, this is the blessed night referred to in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

We sent it down on a blessed night…	*innā anzalnā-hu fī lailatin*
in which every firm decree	*mubārakatin… fī-hā yufraqu*
is made distinct. (44:3,4)	*kullu amrin ḥakīm.*

Next, He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The Night of Power is better	*Lailatu 'l-Qadri khairun*
than a thousand months. (97:3)	*min alfi shahr.*

In other words, good deeds therein are better than [those performed in] a thousand months that are without a Night of Power.

It is said of the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* (may Allāh be well pleased with them) that they never felt so happy about anything, as they felt about His words (Exalted is He): "better than a thousand months *[khairun min alfi shahr]*." The story behind this goes as follows:

One day, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was telling his Companions about four of the Children of Israel *[Banī Isrā'īl]*, and how they worshipfully served Allāh for eighty years, without disobeying Him for one single twinkling of an eye in all of that time. The four he spoke about were Job *[Ayyūb]*,[200] Zacharias *[Zakariyyā]*,[201] Ezekiel *[Ḥizqīl]*,[202] and Joshua the son of Nūn[203] *[Yūsha' ibn Nūn]* (peace be upon them all).

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[200] Job *[Ayyūb]* (peace be upon him) is mentioned several times in the Qur'ān, as a Prophet and an example of patience.

[201] Zacharias *[Zakariyyā]* is mentioned several times in the Qur'ān, where he is hailed as the father of John the Baptist *[Yaḥyā]* (peace be upon them both).

[202] Ezekiel *[Ḥizqīl]* (peace be upon him) is not mentioned by name in the Qur'ān, but the Qur'ānic commentators have identified an allusion to him therein, and he is frequently referred to in traditional reports. (See: Thomas Patrick Hughes, *op. cit.*, art. EZEKIEL, and *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, art. ḤIZQĪL.)

[203] Although not mentioned by name in the Qur'ān, Joshua the son of Nūn *[Yūsha' ibn Nūn]* (peace be upon him) is identified by some Islamic authorities as the servant of Moses (peace be upon him), who is mentioned in Q. 18:60.

The Companions of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) were greatly amazed at all of this, so Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to him and said: "O Muhammad, it seems to have come as a great surprise to you and your Companions, to learn that these individuals were devoted to worshipful service for eighty years, without disobeying Allāh (Exalted is He) for one single twinkling of an eye in all of that time. So now Allāh has sent down to you something even better than that!" Then he recited to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Behold, We sent it down	*innā anzalnā-hu*
on the Night of Power.	*fī Lailati 'l-Qadr.*
And what has made you know	*wa mā adrā-ka*
what is the Night of Power?	*mā Lailatu 'l-Qadr.*
The Night of Power is better	*Lailatu 'l-Qadri khairun*
than a thousand months.	*min alfi shahr.*
In it the angels	*tanazzalu 'l-malā'ikatu*
and the Spirit come down	*wa 'r-Rūḥu fī-hā*
by their Lord's permission,	*bi-idhni Rabbi-him*
on every errand.	*min kulli amr.*
Peace it is, until	*salāmun hiya*
the rising of the of dawn. (97:1–5)	*ḥattā maṭla'i 'l-fajr.*

Gabriel (peace be upon him) then said to him: "This is even more excellent than that which you and your Companions found so amazing." Needless to say, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was highly delighted.

It was Yaḥyā ibn Najīḥ who said: "Once upon a time, among the Children of Israel *[Banī Isrā'īl]*, there was a man who carried a weapon for a thousand months in the service of Allāh's cause *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*, and not once in all of that time did he set his weapon aside. Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) mentioned this to his Companions, and they found the story quite amazing. So it was then that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) sent down the revelation:

The Night of Power is better	*Lailatu 'l-Qadri khairun*
than a thousand months. (97:3)	*min alfi shahr.*

—meaning: 'better than those thousand months, during which that man bore a weapon in the service of Allāh's cause *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*, and never once set his weapon aside.'

"As for the name by which the man was known among the Children of Israel *[Banī Isrā'īl]*, some say it was Simon the Worshipful Servant *[Sham'ūn al-'Ābid]*, while others say it was Samson *[Shamsūn]*."

Let us now consider the significance of each element in His saying (Exalted is He):

In it the angels	*tanazzalu 'l-malā'ikatu*
and the Spirit come down	*wa 'r-Rūḥu fī-hā*
by their Lord's permission,	*bi-idhni Rabbi-him*
on every errand.	*min kulli amr.*
Peace it is, until	*salāmun hiya*
the rising of the of dawn. (97:4,5)	*ḥattā maṭla'i 'l-fajr.*

1. What is meant by "the angels come down *[tanazzalu 'l-malā'ikatu]*" is that they come down in succession, from the setting of the sun until the the rising of the of dawn.

2. "The Spirit *[ar-Rūḥ]*" means Gabriel (peace be upon him).

According to ad-Ḍahhāk, it was Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said: "The Spirit *[ar-Rūḥ]* is in the shape of a human being with a gigantic physical build, and he is the one to whom Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) was referring when He said:

And they will ask you	*wa yas'alūna-ka*
about the Spirit. (17:85)	*'ani 'r-Rūḥ.*

"He is the angel who will stand in the company of the angels, when they line up in rows on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, but in a rank by himself."

According to al-Muqātil: "He is the most noble of all the angels in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He)."

Someone else has said: "He is an angel whose face is shaped like that of a human being, while his body is the body of the angels. He is the most enormous creature in the presence of the Heavenly Throne *['Arsh]*, so he will stand in a row all by himself, when the angels stand arrayed." The last part of this statement is, of course, a reference to the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

On the day when the Spirit	*yawma yaqūmu 'r-Rūḥu*
and the angels stand arrayed. (78:38)	*wa 'l-malā'ikatu ṣaffā.*

3. "In it [*fī-hā*]" simply means: "in the Night of Power [*fī Lailat al-Qadr*]."

4. "By their Lord's permission [*bi-idhni Rabbi-him*]" means, in effect: "by their Lord's command [*bi-amri Rabbi-him*]."

5. "On every errand [*min kulli amr*]" is a way of saying: "for every good purpose."

6. "Peace it is [*salāmun hiya*]" has exactly the same meaning as: "It is peace [*hiya salāmun*]," which signifies that it is perfectly safe and salubrious [*salīma*]. No sickness or disease can break out in the course of it, nor can it be disturbed by any kind of hocus-pocus [*kahāna*].

It has also been maintained that "*salāmun* [peace]" means the greeting of peace, with which the angels salute the true believers [*salāmu 'l-malā'ikati 'ala 'l-mu'minīn*] among the people of the earth, for they say to them: "Peace, peace, until the rising of the dawn [*salāmun salāmun ḥattā maṭla'i 'l-fajr*]!"

7. As for the phrase "until the rising of the dawn [*ḥattā maṭla'i 'l-fajr*]," we should note the existence of an alternative reading for the Arabic word *maṭla'*. By substituting the vowel –*i*– for the vowel –*a*– after the consonant –*l*–,[204] we arrive at the form *maṭli'*.[205] The *maṭli'* of the dawn means the rising [*al-ṭulū'*] thereof, while *maṭla'* denotes the place or point at which it rises [*yaṭlu'u*].[206]

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[204] In the original text, the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is able to express this much more neatly, by using the technical term of Arabic grammar: *bi-kasri 'l-lām*.

[205] The reading *ḥattā maṭli'i 'l-fajr* is a traditionally accepted alternative to *ḥattā maṭla'i 'l-fajr*. See, for instance, the celebrated Qur'ānic commentary called *Tafsīr al-Jalālain*, the first half of which was compiled by Shaikh Jalālu'd-dīn al-Mahallī (d. A.H. 864), and the rest by Jalālu'd-dīn as-Suyūṭī (d. A.H. 911).

[206] In either case, according to the Qur'ānic commentary mentioned in note 205 above, the meaning is understood to be: "till the time of its rising [*ilā waqti ṭulū'i-hā*]." (Jalālu'd-dīn al-Mahallī and Jalālu'd-dīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tafsīr al-Jalālain*. Istanbul: Salāh Bilici Kitabevi Yayinlari, n.d.; pt. 2, p. 267.)

On the fact that the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* should be looked for during the last ten days of the month of Ramaḍān.

The Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* should be looked for during the last ten days of the month of Ramadān, and it is most likely to be the night of the twenty-seventh.

According to the doctrine of Imām Mālik[207] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), however, all the nights of the last ten days are equal candidates, and none of them is more probable than any other.

According to the doctrine of Imām ash-Shāfi'ī[208] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), on the other hand, the most likely candidate is the twenty-first.

Some have maintained that it is the night of the nineteenth, this being the doctrine of 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

Abū Burda al-Aslamī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), is known to have said: "It is the night of the twenty-third."

Abū Dharr[209] and al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with them) are both known to have said: "It is the night of the twenty-fifth."

According to a traditional report attributed to Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him),[210] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said: "It is the night of the twenty-fourth."

Ibn 'Abbās and Ubayy ibn Ka'b[211] (may Allāh be well pleased with them) are both known to have said: "It is the night of the twenty-seventh."

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[207] Imām Mālik ibn Anas (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the founder of one of the four schools *[madhāhib]* of Islamic jurisprudence. He died in the year A.H. 179/795 C.E.

[208] Imām Abū 'Abdi'llāh Muhammad ibn Idrīs ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the founder of one of the four schools *[madhāhib]* of Islamic jurisprudence. He died in the year A.H. 204/820 C.E. Imām al-Ghazālī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was one of the most notable professors of the Shāfi'ī school.

[209] See note 23 on p. 18 above.

[210] See note 192 on p. 98 above.

[211] Ubayy ibn Ka'b (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was one of the Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to whom particular editions of the text of the Qur'ān, prior to the authorization of 'Uthmān's version, have been ascribed. (See: *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, art. AL-KUR'ĀN.)

The strongest evidence in favor of the conclusion that the most likely candidate is the night of the twenty-seventh—although Allāh knows best *[wa'llāhu A'lam]*—has been presented by Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal[212] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). Citing an authoritative chain of transmission *[isnād]*, the Imām reports that Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said:

"It seemed that people would never stop telling the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about how, in their dreams, they had seen which of the last ten nights was the Night. So the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) eventually declared: "As I cannot help but notice, your dreams repeatedly suggest that it is one of the odd-numbered nights among the final ten. If anyone is really keen to investigate, let him focus his research on the seventh night of the final ten."

Ibn 'Abbās is reported as having said to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with them):

"I made a careful study of all the uneven numbers *[afrād]*, and I had to conclude that none was more worthy of note than the number seven *[as-sab'a]*."

To demonstrate the special significance of the number seven, we shall now repeat what a certain learned scholar had to say on the subject:

"There are seven heavens, and there are seven earths.

"There are seven nights [in a week].

"There are seven celestial spheres *[aflāk]*, and there are seven constellations *[nujūm]*.

"There are seven laps to be covered at a brisk pace *[sa'y]* between [the small hills] of aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwa.[213]

"There are seven circuits to be performed in the circumambulation *[ṭawāf]* of the House [of Allāh].[214]

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[212] Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the founder of one of the four schools *[madhāhib]* of Islamic jurisprudence. He died in the year A.H. 241/855 C.E. The legal doctrines of the Ḥanbalī school were those studied most intensively by the author, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) as a young man.

[213] This sentence refers to one of the rites of the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*. (For a detailed account, see: Vol. 1, pp. 26–52.)

[214] The circumambulation *[ṭawāf]* of the House of Allāh *[Baitu'llāh]*, i.e., the Ka'ba, is another rite of the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*.

"There are seven ingredients in the physical constitution of a human being, seven ingredients in his basic diet, and seven slits or cavities in the surface of his face.

"There are seven seals [*khawātīm*].[215]

"There are seven verses [*āyāt*] in the Sūra of Praise [*Sūrat al-Ḥamd*].[216]

"There are seven modes [*aḥruf*] of reciting the Qur'ān.[217]

"There are seven oft-repeated verses [*as-sab'u 'l-mathānī*].[218]

"In the act of prostration [*sujūd*] during the ritual prayer [*salāt*], seven parts of the body are brought into contact with the ground.

"There are seven gates of Hell [*Jahannam*], and Hell has seven names, corresponding to its seven descending steps or levels [*darakāt*].[219]

"There were seven Companions of the Cave [*Aṣḥāb al-Kahf*].[220]

"In the course of seven nights, the tribe of 'Ād was annihilated by the wind.[221]

"For seven years, Joseph [*Yūsuf*] (peace be upon him) remained in prison.

"There were [two sets of] seven cows [*baqarāt*] in the dream of the king

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[215] The seven seals [*khawātīm*] mark the division of the Qur'ān into seven sections or stages [*manāzil*], an arrangement designed to facilitate the recitation of the entire Book in the course of a week.

[216] This is one of the many alternative titles sometimes given to what is most commonly known as the Opening Sūra [*Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*] of the Noble Qur'ān. It alludes to the first verse [*āya*] thereof, which reads: "Praise be to Allāh, Lord of All the Worlds [*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn*]."

[217] The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> The Qur'ān has been revealed according to seven dialects [*nazala 'l-Qur'ānu 'alā sab'ati aḥruf*].

This has been interpreted to mean: "according to seven modes of reading or recitation." (See: E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ḥ–R–F*; also *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, art. AL-KUR'ĀN; and Thomas Patrick Hughes, op. cit., art. SEVEN DIALECTS.)

[218] Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said in the Qur'ān (15:87):

We have given you seven	*wa la-qad ātainā-ka sab'an*
of the oft-repeated [verses]	*mina 'l-mathānī*
and the mighty Qur'ān.	*wa 'l-Qur'āna 'l-'aẓīm.*

According to some authorities, the seven *mathānī* are the oft-repeated verses [*āyāt*] of the Opening Sūra [*Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*] of the Qur'ān. Others maintain that the seven *mathānī* are the seven long Sūras from *Sūrat al-Baqara* to *Sūrat al-A'rāf*. (For yet other interpretations, see: E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *TH–N–Y* and art. *S–B–'*.)

[219] The names of the descending levels of Hell are as follows: (1) *Jahannam*, (2) *Laẓā*, (3) *al-Ḥuṭama*, (4) *Sa'īr*, (5) *Saqar*, (6) *al-Jaḥīm*, (7) *Hāwiya*. All of these are mentioned in the Qur'ān, but the traditional commentators differ as to their order of descent.

[220] Their story is told in the Sūra of the Cave [*Sūrat al-Kahf*], the 18th Sūra of the Qur'ān. In the Christian tradition, they are known as the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus.

[221] The Prophet Hūd (peace be upon him) and a few righteous men were the only survivors.

of Egypt, as mentioned by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) in the Sūra of Joseph *[Sūrat Yūsuf]*:

And the king said: "I saw in a dream	*wa qāla 'l-maliku innī arā*
seven fat cows, and seven	*sab'a baqarātin simānin*
lean ones devouring them." (12:43)	*ya'kulu-hunna sab'un 'ijāfun*

"There would be seven years of drought, and then seven years of plenty, according to the prediction made by Joseph *[Yūsuf]* (peace be upon him).

"There are seventeen cycles *[rak'a]*, all told, in the five daily prayers *[ṣalawāt]*.[222]

"The number seven is mentioned in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Then a fast of three days	*fa-ṣiyāmu thalāthati ayyāmin*
while on the Pilgrimage,	*fi 'l-Ḥajji*
and of seven when	*wa sab'atin*
you have returned. (2:196)	*idhā raja'tum.*

"There are seven degrees of relationship by blood *[nasab]* within which it is unlawful to marry.[223]

"There are seven degrees of relationship by fosterage *[riḍā']* and marriage *[ṣihr]*, within which it is likewise unlawful to marry.[224]

"Before they can be considered pure and fit for human use, food containers in which dogs have lapped must be washed and scrubbed seven times, including one scrubbing with dry earth. Such is the rule laid down by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

"There are twenty-seven Arabic 'words' *[ḥurūf]*[225] in the Sūra of Power

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[222] The total of seventeen is arrived at by adding together: (a) the two cycles of the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]*, (b) the four cycles of the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*, (c) the four cycles of the afternoon prayer *[ṣalāt al-'aṣr]*, (d) the three cycles of the sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*, and (e) the four cycles of the late evening prayer *[ṣalāt al-'ishā']*.

[223] As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us in the Qur'ān (4:23):

Forbidden to you are	*ḥurrimat 'alai-kum*
your mothers,	*ummahātu-kum*
and your daughters,	*wa banātu-kum*
and your sisters,	*wa akhawātu-kum*
and your paternal aunts,	*wa 'ammātu-kum*
and your maternal aunts,	*wa khālātu-kum*
and your brother's daughters,	*wa banātu 'l-akhi*
and your sister's daughters	*wa banātu 'l-ukhti*

[224] In this category, it is forbidden for a man to marry: (1) his foster-mother, (2) his foster-sister, (3) his mother-in-law, (4) his daughter-in-law, (5) his stepdaughter, (6) the sister of a wife to whom he is still married, and (7) the widow or divorced wife of his father.

[225] The basic meaning of the term *ḥarf* (of which *ḥurūf* and *aḥruf* are plural forms) is "a letter of the Arabic alphabet." As in this context, however, it may also signify "a connected group of Arabic letters, representing either a separate word, or, in some cases, a grammatical combination of two or more elements, only one of which can normally be written separately."

[Sūrat al-Qadr], up to but not including the verse *[āya]*: 'Peace it is *[salāmun hiya]*....'[226]

"Job *[Ayyūb]* (peace be upon him) endured trial and tribulation for seven years.

"'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: 'Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) married me when I was seven years of age.'

"There are seven 'days of the old hag' *[ayyām al-'ajūz]*, i.e., of the destructive wind *[husūm]*: three in February *[Shubāt]* and four in March *[Ādhār]*.[227]

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The martyrs *[shuhadā']* of my Community *[Ummati]* are seven, namely: (1) one who is killed in battle, while fighting for the cause of Allāh *[al-qatīl fī sabīli'llāh]*; (2) the victim of the plague *[al-maṭ'ūn]*; (3) the victim of pulmonary tuberculosis *[al-maslūl]*; (4) one whose death is caused by drowning *[al-gharīq]*; (5) one who is trapped in a fire and burned to death *[al-ḥarīq]*; (6) one whose death results from a gastric or intestinal ailment *[al-mabṭūn]*; (7) the woman who dies in the process of childbirth *[an-nafsā']*.

"Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) swore *[aqsama]* by seven things, when He said, in the first seven verses of the Sūra of the Sun *[Sūrat ash-Shams]* (91:1–7):

1. By the sun and its brightness,	*wa 'sh-shamsi wa ḍuḥā-hā*
2. and the moon when she follows him,	*wa 'l-qamari idhā talā-hā*
3. and the day when it reveals him,	*wa 'n-nahāri idhā jallā-hā*
4. and the night when it enshrouds him,	*wa 'l-laili idhā yaghshā-hā*
5. and the heaven and Him who built it,	*wa 's-samā'i wa mā banā-hā*
6. and the earth and Him who spread it,	*wa 'l-arḍi wa mā ṭaḥā-hā*
7. and a soul and Him who perfected it.	*wa nafsin wa mā sawwāhā.*

"Moses *[Mūsā]* (peace be upon him) stood seven cubits tall, and the length of the staff of Moses was also seven cubits.

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[226] The twenty-seven elements counted as *ḥurūf* ['words'] are therefore the following:

(1) *innā* (2) *anzalnā-hu* (3) *fī* (4) *Lailati* (5) *'l-Qadr* (6) *wa* (7) *mā* (8) *adrā-ka* (9) *mā* (10) *Lailatu* (11) *'l-Qadr* (12) *Lailatu* (13) *'l-Qadr* (14) *khairun* (15) *min* (16) *alfi* (17) *shahr* (18) *tanazzalu* (19) *'l-malā'ikatu* (20) *wa* (21) *'r-Rūḥu* (22) *fī-hā* (23) *bi-idhni* (24) *Rabbi-him* (25) *min* (26) *kulli* (27) *amr*

[227] Their names are said to be: (1) *ṣinn*, (2) *ṣinnabr*, (3) *wabr*, (4) *al-āmir*, (5) *al-mu'tamir*, (6) *al-mu'allil*, and (7) *al-jamr al-muṭfi'* or *muṭfi' aẓ-ẓa'n*. (See E. W. Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, art. '–J–Z and art. H–S–M.) These are the seven days during which the tribe of 'Ād was destroyed by the wind. (See p. 108 above.)

"It is thus established that most things [of great religious importance] are associated with the number seven. This means that Allāh (Exalted is He) has implicitly indicated to His servants that the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* is the twenty-seventh, by virtue of His statement:

Peace it is, until the rising of the of dawn. (97:5)	*salāmun hiya* *ḥattā maṭla'i 'l-fajr.*

"He has thereby given us to understand that the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* is the night of the twenty-seventh [of the month of Ramaḍān]."[228]

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[228] Since this conclusion hinges on the expression "Peace it is... *[salāmun hiya...]*," we are no doubt expected to be aware that the word *salām* [peace] occurs seven times in the Qur'ān. These are the relevant verses *[āyāt]*:

1. "Peace!"—[that is] a word [of greeting] from a Lord All-Compassionate. (36:58)	*salāmun qawlan* *min Rabbin Raḥīm.*
2. Peace be upon Noah among all beings! (37:79)	*salāmun 'alā Nūḥin* *fi 'l-'ālamīn.*
3. Peace be upon Abraham! (37:109)	*salāmun 'alā Ibrāhīm.*
4. Peace be upon Moses and Aaron! (37:120)	*salāmun 'alā Mūsā wa Hārūn.*
5. Peace be upon Elias! (37:130)	*salāmun 'alā Ilyāsīn.*
6. And peace be upon those sent as Messengers! (37:181)	*wa salāmun* *'ala 'l-Mursalīn.*
7. Peace it is, until the rising of the of dawn. (97:5)	*salāmun hiya* *ḥattā maṭla'i 'l-fajr.*

From another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a maidservant or a manservant [belonging to the inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise] were ever to emerge into this lower world, all the people of this world would surely engage in mortal combat over her or him, until they were all extinct. And if the maidens of Paradise, with eyes so fair *[al-hūr al-ʿīn]*,[392] were ever to let their locks of hair trail down upon the earth, the light of the sun would be extinguished, because of their vastly brighter radiance.

Someone once asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, how great is the contrast [in the Garden of Paradise] between the manservant *[khādim]*, on the one hand, and the man who is served as a master *[makhdūm]*, on the other?" To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> By the One in whose Hand my soul is held, the distinction [in the Garden of Paradise] between the manservant *[khādim]*, on the one hand, and the man who is served as a master *[makhdūm]*, on the other, is like the stars that are almost too faint to be visible, in contrast to the moon at the halfway point [i.e., in the middle of the month, when it is at the full].[393]

Let us now resume our description of the state of bliss enjoyed by that inhabitant of the Garden of Paradise:

While he is sitting there upon his thronelike couch *[sarīr]*, lo and behold, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will send him an angel, bearing seventy fine articles of clothing, each of a different kind. These gifts will be tucked out of sight between the two fingers of the angel, who will also be conveying the salutation of peace and contentment. On reaching the door of the man's abode, the angel will come to a halt, saying to the doorkeeper: "Permit me to enter the presence of Allāh's saintly friend *[walī]*, for I come to him as the Messenger of the Lord of All the Worlds." The doorkeeper will say in response: "By Allāh, I do not possess the authority to converse with him directly. Nevertheless, I shall mention you to my immediate superiors among the doorkeeping

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[392] See note 333 on p. 241 above.

[393] From the general context of this passage, it seems safe to assume that the contrast referred to here—first by the anonymous questioner and then by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)—is one that exists in the Garden of Paradise, although this is not explicitly stated in either case. To confirm the assumption, we may adduce the rather similar traditional report (cited on p. 285 above) from which we learn, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also used to say:

> The handsomeness of the true specimen of manhood *[rajul]*, in contrast to the handsomeness of the manservant *[khādim]* among the people of the Garden of Paradise, is like [the brilliance of] the moon on the night when it is full, in contrast to [the fainter brilliance of] the stars.

There is plenty of traditional evidence, however, to justify the point of view adopted by our Ḥanbalī colleagues, as we shall demonstrate:

According to one traditional account, related by al-Qāḍī [the Judge] al-Imām Abū Ya'la (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), it was Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who reported that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:[231]

> Allāh grants forgiveness, on the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum'a*], to all the people of Islām.

No comparable excellence is known to have been attributed by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to any of the other nights.

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is also reported as having said:

> Invoke Allāh's blessing upon me,[232] many times over, in the course of the illustrious night [*al-lailat al-gharrā'*], and during the brightly shining day [*al-yaum al-azhar*]—on the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum'a*], and then on the Day itself.

The adjective *gharrā'* [illustrious] is related to the noun *ghurra*, which means the highlight, the prime, the finest feature of something.[233]

Another point in favor of the superior excellence of the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum'a*] is the very fact that it immediately precedes the Day itself. This is indeed a telling point, because we have been taught so much about the excellence of that Day, and so little about the excellence of the day of the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*].

The following traditional reports are highly significant in this connection:

According to Anas [ibn Mālik][234] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The sun never rises to usher in a day that is more splendid, in the sight of Allāh, than the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Yaum al-Jum'a*], and none is dearer to Him.

[231] ***Author's note:*** Imām Abū Ya'la (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has provided a complete chain of transmitting authorities [*isnād*] to verify the authenticity of this report.

[232] That is to say, by repeating the invocation: "Allāh bless him and give him peace [*ṣalla'llāhu 'alaihi wa sallam*]."

[233] The *ghurra* of a horse, for instance, is the blaze on its forehead.

[234] See note 35 on p. 24 above.

According to Abū Huraira[235] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The sun never rises, nor does it ever set, upon a day that is more excellent than the Day of Congregational Prayer *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*. There is no creature that walks or crawls upon the earth, that is not terrified of the Day of Congregational Prayer *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, apart from these two species *[thaqalān]*: the jinn and human beings.

According to another report from Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> On the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will resurrect the days in a manner that displays their condition. When He brings forth the Day of Congregational Prayer *[al-Jum'a]*, it will be shining with a radiant beauty, and its own people will greet it with affectionate respect, as if it were a bride being led in procession to her noble bridegroom, beaming upon them as they walk in her radiance. Their complexions will be like snow, and their fragrant aroma will be like musk. They will plunge into mountains of camphor, and the people assembled at the Place of Standing *[al-Mauqif]*, humans and jinn alike, will stare at them in wonder, too fascinated to blink an eye, until they enter the Garden of Paradise.

Suppose someone were to say: "That all sounds very convincing, no doubt, but what is your response to His saying (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The Night of Power is better than a thousand months. (97:3)?"	*Lailatu 'l-Qadri khairun* *min alfi shahr.*

To this our reply would be as follows: "What is meant to be understood by it is: "better than a thousand months—in the reckoning of which the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer *[Lailat al-Jum'a]* is not included." This interpretation should be perfectly comprehensible even to those who prefer the other point of view, since their understanding of the phrase is: "better than a thousand months—in the reckoning of which the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* is not included."[236]

In defense of our point of view, we should also point out that the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer *[Lailat al-Jum'a]* is everlasting in the Garden of Paradise—because visiting with Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) takes place during the Day thereof.[237] Furthermore, its position in the calendar is known for certain here in this lower world,[238] whereas the exact date of the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] can only be surmised.

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[235] See note 36 on p. 24 above.

[236] Logically, if this were not so, the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* would be better than itself.

[237] In Vol. 2, pp. 269–86, the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has quoted lengthy traditional reports concerning the Garden of Paradise.

It must be admitted, notwithstanding, that a case can be made in favor of the view preferred by at-Tamimi and some other learned scholars.[239] When they maintain that the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] is more excellent than any other night, they begin by citing the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

The Night of Power is better than a thousand months. (97:3)	*Lailatu 'l-Qadri khairun min alfi shahr.*

Then, having noted the fact that a thousand months are the equivalent of eighty-three years and four months,[240] they cite the following traditional reports:[241]

It said that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was shown the life spans of the members of his Community [*Umma*], and he considered them too short, so he was granted the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*].

Imām Mālik ibn Anas[242] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "I have heard, from someone whose word I trust, that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once saw the life spans of all the people before his own time, or as much of that as Allāh (Exalted is He) wished him to see. In this vision, it seemed to him that the life spans of those belonging to his own Community [*Umma*] had become shorter by comparison, with the result that they could not accomplish as much good work, in the course of a lifetime, as others who had preceded them. It was then that Allāh granted him the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*], which is better than a thousand months."

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[238] "In this world," to put it in simple English, "Friday comes but once a week, and always between Thursday and Saturday."

[239] Near the beginning of this subsection (p. 112 above), the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has ascribed to Abu 'l-Hasan at-Tamimi (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) a viewpoint that sets him somewhat apart from the other learned scholars.

[240] Even at the end of the 20th century, and even among the most technologically developed societies, eighty-three years and four months would represent an above-average span of life expectancy.

[241] As the reader can hardly fail to notice, few transmitting authorities—if any—are named in connection with these particular reports.

[242] See note 207 on p. 106 above.

Imām Mālik ibn Anas (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) also said: "It has come to my attention that Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib[243] once said: 'If someone is present at the late evening prayer *[salāt al-'ishā']* on the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*, he will derive good fortune therefrom.'

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If someone performs both the late evening *['ishā']* and sunset *[maghrib]* prayers in congregation, he will obtain his share of good fortune from the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*. Moreover, if he recites it—meaning the Sūra of Power *[Sūrat al-Qadr]*—it will be as if he had recited one fourth of the entire Qur'ān.[244]

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[243] Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib [or, al-Musayyab] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was an early scholar of Prophetic tradition. He died in A.H. 93. (There is some uncertainty as to the correct spelling of his last name. The forms *ibn al-Musayyib* and *ibn al-Musayyab* both occur, often in the same text.)

[244] **Author's note:** It is a recommended practice for the worshipper to recite the Sūra of Power *[Sūrat al-Qadr]* in the final late evening prayer *['ishā']* of the month of Ramaḍān.

On the answer to the question: "Why has Allāh not informed His servants of an exact date, on which the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* is certain to occur?"

Suppose someone raises the question: "Why has Allāh not informed His servants of an exact date, on which the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* is certain to occur, just as He has provided them with precise and unambiguous information concerning the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer *[Lailat al-Jum'a]*?"

The appropriate response will be to tell the questioner: "His purpose (Exalted is He) is to make sure that His servants do not take it for granted that they have performed good deeds on that particular night. Were it not for this element of uncertainty, they could make the claim: 'We have performed good deeds on a night that is better than a thousand months, so Allāh has granted us forgiveness, and in His sight we are now entitled to spiritual degrees and Gardens of Paradise.' They might therefore abandon all further effort to do good works, and simply rest on their laurels. Having thus fallen prey to unduly optimistic expectation, they would then be doomed to perdition."

It should also be noted that, as a similar measure of precaution, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has refrained from informing His servants as to when their individual lifetimes are due to expire. Were it not so, a person with a long life still ahead of him could say: "I intend to give free rein to my carnal desires, indulging in all the pleasures this world has to offer, and enjoying its comforts to the full. Eventually, of course, when the expiration of my term draws near, I shall repent and devote myself to the worshipful service of my Lord. I shall then die as a penitent and reformed character."

In actual fact, Allāh (Exalted is He) has kept their appointed terms concealed from them, so they must always be cautious and wary of death. Under these circumstances, they have a permanent incentive to practice good conduct, to pursue repentance with diligent perseverance, and to make constant efforts to improve their behavior. Death, whenever it comes to claim them, will therefore find them in a very good spiritual state. As well as receiving their allotted shares *[aqsām]* of pleasure and sensual enjoyment in this world, they will be safely delivered from Allāh's torment in the hereafter, by the mercy *[raḥma]* of Allāh (Exalted is He).

The following anonymous saying is also worth quoting:

"Allāh (Exalted is He) has concealed five things inside five: (1) He has concealed Allāh's good pleasure inside worshipful acts of obedience *[ṭāʿāt]*; (2) He has concealed His wrath inside sinful acts of disobedience *[maʿāṣī]*; (3) He has concealed the middle prayer *[aṣ-ṣalāt al-wusṭā]* [245] among the other ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*; (4) He has concealed His saintly friend *[walī]* among the rest of His creatures; (5) He has concealed the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* within the month of Ramaḍān."

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[245] Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us in the Qurʾān:

Be careful to observe your prayers,	ḥāfiẓū ʿala ʾṣ-ṣalawāti
and [especially] the middle prayer,	wa ʾṣ-ṣalāti ʾl-wusṭā
and stand obedient to Allāh. (2:238)	wa qūmū li'llāhi qānitīn

Concerning the five nights granted by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) to the Chosen One *[al-Muṣṭafā]* (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has conferred five special nights upon the Chosen One *[al-Muṣṭafā]* (Allāh bless him and give him peace), namely:

1. The Night of the Miracle and the Supernatural Skill *[Lailat al-Muʿjiza wa 'l-Qudra]*.[246]

This is the night referred to in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

The Hour has drawn near and	*iqtarabati 's-sāʿatu*
the moon has been split in two. (54:1)	*wa 'nshaqqa 'l-qamar.*

In the case of Moses *[Mūsā]* (peace be upon him), the miraculous splitting of the sea was brought about by the stroke of his staff. In the case of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), on the other hand, the miraculous splitting of the moon was brought about by the mere pointing of the finger of the Chosen One *[al-Muṣṭafā]* (Allāh bless him and give him peace).[247] It is therefore preeminent in the whole domain of the Prophetic miracles *[muʿjizāt]*, the working of wonders *[iʿjāz]*, and the exercise of supernatural skill *[qudra]*.[248]

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[246] The term *muʿjiza* (plural *muʿjizāt*) is applied to a miracle performed by a Prophet *[nabī]*, and is distinguished from the *karāma* performed by a saint *[walī]* or righteous person *[ṣāliḥ]*. As defined by the Islāmic theologians, a *muʿjiza* is "an event at variance with the usual course of nature, produced by one who lays claim to the office of a Prophet, in contending with those who refuse to acknowledge his claim, in such a manner as renders them unable to produce the like thereof." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *ʿ-J-Z*.)

[247] In his famous commentary *[tafsīr]* on the Qurʾān, al-Baidāwī says: "Some say that the unbelievers demanded this sign of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and so the moon was split in two, but others say it refers to a sign of the coming Resurrection."

[248] In Vol. 1, pp. 250–53, the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has told us:

> It is also universally believed by the people of Islām that the Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was granted as many miracles *[muʿjizāt]* as those bestowed upon the rest of the Prophets, and more besides. Some of the experts in religious knowledge *[ahl al-ʿilm]* have counted no fewer than a thousand such miracles. Included among them is the Qurʾān....

2. The Night of the Response and the Summons *[Lailat al-Ijāba wa 'd-Da'wa]*.

This is the night on which a company of the jinn urged their people to respond to the summons of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). In the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And when We turned toward you	*wa idh ṣarafnā ilai-ka*
a company of the jinn,	*nafaran mina 'l-jinni*
who wished to hear the Qur'ān,...	*yastami'ūna 'l-Qur'ān...*
they said...	*qālū*
"O people of ours! Respond to Allāh's	*yā qawma-nā ajībū dā'iya 'llāhi*
summoner and believe in him."	*wa āminū bi-hi.*
(46:29–31)	

3. The Night of the Decree and the Adjudication *[Lailat al-Ḥukm wa 'l-Qaḍiyya]*.

This is the night referred to in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

We have sent it down	*innā anzalnā-hu*
on a blessed night—	*fī lailatin mubārakatin:*
surely We are ever warning—	*innā kunnā mundhirīn:*
in which every firm decree	*fī-hā yufraqu*
is made distinct. (44:3,4)	*kullu amrin ḥakīm.*

4. The Night of Nearness and Closeness *[Lailat ad-Dunuww wa 'l-Qurba]*.

This is the Night of the Heavenly Ascension *[Lailat al-Mi'rāj]*[249] of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the Night of which Allāh (Exalted is He) was speaking when He said:

Glory be to the One who carried	*subḥāna 'lladhī asrā*
His servant by night	*bi-'abdi-hi lailan*
from the Sacred Place of Worship	*mina 'l-Masjidi 'l-Ḥarāmi*
to the Far Distant Place of Worship,	*ila 'l-Masjidi 'l-Aqṣa 'lladhī*
the precincts of which We	*bāraknā ḥawla-hu*
have blessed, that We might show	*li-nuriya-hu min āyāti-nā:*
him some of Our signs!	*inna-hu*
Surely He, only He is the	*Huwa 's-Samī'u 'l-Baṣīr.*
All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. (17:1)	

5. The Night of Peace and Salutation *[Lailat as-Salām wa 't-Taḥiyya]*.

This is none other than the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*, of which Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Behold, We sent it down	*innā anzalnā-hu*
on the Night of Power.	*fī Lailati 'l-Qadr.*

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[249] The Night of the Heavenly Ascension *[Lailat al-Mi'rāj]* is also known as the Night of the Heavenly Journey *[Lailat al-Isrā']*.

And what has made you know	*wa mā adrā-ka*
what is the Night of Power?	*mā Lailatu 'l-Qadr.*
The Night of Power is better	*Lailatu 'l-Qadri khairun*
than a thousand months.	*min alfi shahr.*
In it the angels	*tanazzalu 'l-malā'ikatu*
and the Spirit come down	*wa 'r-Rūḥu fī-hā*
by their Lord's permission,	*bi-idhni Rabbi-him*
on every errand.	*min kulli amr*
Peace it is, until	*salāmun hiya*
the rising of the of dawn. (97:1–5)	*ḥattā maṭla'i 'l-fajr.*

Ibn 'Abbas (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

"As soon as the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* has arrived, Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) will command Gabriel (peace be upon him) to go down to the earth, accompanied by a host of angels, seventy thousand strong, from among the inhabitants of the Lote-Tree of the Farthest Boundary *[Sidrat al-Muntahā]*.[250] They will carry with them banners of light, and once they have alighted upon the surface of the earth, Gabriel (peace be upon him) will set up his banner *[liwā']* and the angels will set up their banners in four localities, namely: (1) next to the Ka'ba in Mecca, (2) next to the tomb of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in Medina, (3) next to the Mosque of Jerusalem *[Bait al-Maqdis]*,[251] and (4) next to the Mosque of Mount Sinai *[Ṭūr Sīnā']*.

"Then Gabriel (peace be upon him) will tell the angels to fan out and go their separate ways, so they will disperse and go off separately in all directions. Not a single house, or chamber, or tent, and not a single boat or ship, in which there is a believing man *[mu'min]* or a believing woman *[mu'min]* to be found, will fail to receive a visit from the angels—apart from any such place that contains a dog, or a pig, or intoxicating liquor, or a person who is ritually unclean from some unlawful contact or behavior *[junub mina 'l-harām]*, or an icon *[ṣūra]*.

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[250] With reference to the experience of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) during his Heavenly Ascension *[Mi'raj]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us in the Qur'ān (53:13,14):

And indeed, he saw Him yet another time—	*wa la-qad ra'ā-hu nazlatan ukhrā*
by the Lote-Tree of the Farthest Boundary.	*'inda Sidrati 'l-Muntahā*

[251] See note 193 on p. 98 above.

"As they make their rounds, the angels will be glorifying the Lord *[yusabbiḥūna]*,[252] extolling His Sanctity *[yuqaddisūna]*,[253] and declaring that worship is due to Him Alone *[yuhallilūna]*,[254] as well as begging forgiveness on behalf of the Community of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace). They will continue in this fashion until, when the moment of dawn arrives, they rise up aloft into the sky. The inhabitants of the lowest heaven will then receive them as their guests, and they will ask them: 'Where are you coming from?' So the traveling angels will say: 'We spent the night in the world below, because it was the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* for the Community of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).'

"The inhabitants of the lowest heaven will then go on to ask: "How has Allāh treated them, and what has He done to meet their needs?" Gabriel (peace be upon him) will respond to this by saying: "Allāh has forgiven the righteous ones among them *[ṣāliḥī-him]*, and He has accepted their intercession on behalf of the unrighteous ones in their midst *[ṭāliḥī-him]*.' On hearing this, the angels of the lowest heaven will raise their voices in glorification *[tasbīḥ]*, sanctification *[taqdīs]*, and praise of the Lord of All the Worlds *[Rabb al-ʿĀlamīn]*, as an expression of gratitude for the forgiveness and acceptance that Allāh has bestowed upon this Community. Then the angels of the lowest heaven will escort their guests up to the second heaven.

"This procedure will then be repeated from each heaven to the next, all the way up to the seventh heaven, at which point Gabriel (peace be upon him) will say: 'O inhabitants of the various heavens, you must now return home!' Obedient to this command, the angels from the various heavens will promptly return to their respective places, and those who are inhabitants of the Lote-Tree of the Farthest Boundary *[Sidrat al-Muntahā]* will return to the Lote-Tree.

[252] That is to say, they will be proclaiming: "*subḥāna'llāh* [Glory be to Allāh]!" Like the verbal noun *tasbīḥ* (see note 180 on p. 94 above), the verb *yusabbiḥūna* is derived from the same three-consonant root—*s-b-ḥ*—as the word *subḥān*.

[253] That is to say, they will be proclaiming: "*taqaddasa'llāh* [Sanctified is Allāh]!" (See note 256 on p. 123 below.)

[254] That is to say, they will be proclaiming: "*lā ilāha illa'llāh* [There is no god but Allāh]!" The form *yuhallilūna* is a grammatical derivative of the basic verb *hallala*, of which the corresponding verbal noun is *tahlīl*.

"As soon as their fellow angels have come home from their mission, the inhabitants of the Lote-Tree will ask them: 'Where have you been?' So the travelers will give them the same answer as the one they gave to the inhabitants of the lowest heaven. On hearing this, the inhabitants of the Lote-Tree will raise their voices in glorification *[tasbīh]*[255] and sanctification *[taqdīs]*.[256] The sound of their voices will be heard by the Garden of Refuge *[Jannat al-Ma'wā]*, then by the Garden of Blissful Happiness *[Jannat an-Na'īm]*, then by the Garden of Eden *[Jannat 'Adn]*, and then by [the highest Garden of] Paradise *[(Jannat) al-Firdaws]*,[257] and so it will come to be heard by the Throne of the All-Merciful One *['Arsh ar-Raḥmān]*.

The Heavenly Throne *['Arsh]* will thereupon raise its voice in glorification *[tasbīh]*, sanctification *[taqdīs]*, and praise of the Lord of All the Worlds *[Rabb al-'Ālamīn]*, as an expression of gratitude for all that He has bestowed upon this Community. Although He is All-Knowing *[A'lam]*, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will ask: "O My Throne, why have you raised your voice?" So it will say: "My God *[Ilāhī]*, I have just received the good news that You granted forgiveness, last night, to the righteous members of the Community of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and that You offered to accept the intercession of the righteous ones among them *[ṣāliḥī-him]* on behalf of the unrighteous ones in their midst *[ṭāliḥī-him]*."

"On receiving this answer, Allāh (Exalted is He) will say: "You have spoken the truth, O My Throne, but there is even more to it than that. The Community of Muhammad is entitled, in My sight, to generous favor the likes of which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and no human heart has ever conceived.'"

It has also been said that, when Gabriel (peace be upon him) comes down from heaven on the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*, he will not leave any human being without giving him the greeting of peace and shaking him by the hand. For the recipient, the sign of this will be the sudden appearance of goose bumps all over his skin *[iqshi'rār jildi-hi]*, coinciding with a surge of tender feelings in his heart, and a tearful moistening of his eyes.

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[255] See note 252 on p. 122 above.

[256] Like the verbs *yuqaddisūna* and *tuqaddasu* (see note 253 on p. 122 above), the verbal noun *taqdīs* is derived from the three-consonant root *q-d-s*, which conveys the basic idea of "holiness, sanctity." This same root occurs in the words *Maqdis* and *Muqaddas*, which are applied to the Temple of Jerusalem (see note 193 on p. 98 above).

[257] These four Gardens are all mentioned by name in the Qur'ān.

This explains why, as we have learned from a traditional report: "The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was seriously concerned about the prospects for his Community, so Allāh (Exalted is He) said to him: 'O Muhammad, do not worry, for I shall not remove members of your Community from the lower world, unless I have conferred upon them the spiritual degrees of the Prophets *[darajāt al-Anbiyā']*. In the case of the Prophets (blessings and peace be upon them all), the angels came down to each of them in turn, bringing them the Spirit *[Rūh]*, the message *[risāla]*, the inspiration *[wahy]*, and the charismatic gift of grace *[karāma]*. I shall likewise send the angels down to your Community, on the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*, with the salutation of peace *[taslīm]* and mercy *[rahma]* from Me.'"

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They can be subdivided into six factions, namely the Hudhaliyya, the Naẓẓāmiyya, the Muʿammariyya, the Jubbāʾiyya, the Kaʿbiyya and the Bahshamiyya.

The point on which all the various factions of the Muʿtazila are in virtually unanimous agreement is the negation of the divine attributes *[ṣifāt]* in their entirety. They deny that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has knowledge *[ʿilm]*, power *[qudra]*, life *[ḥayāt]*, and the faculties of hearing *[samʿ]* and sight *[baṣar]*.

They likewise deny the reality of those divine attributes that have been corroborated by traditional report, such as *istiwāʾ* [firmly establishing Himself (on the Throne)], *nuzūl* [descending (to the heaven of this lower world)],[95] as well as others that could be mentioned.

They are also in general agreement in professing the following doctrines:

- That the Speech *[kalām]* of Allāh is not eternal, but has been created subsequent to the beginning of time, and that His Will *[irāda]* is likewise a product of creation *[muḥdatha]*.
- That He speaks [not directly but] by means of a faculty of speech that He has created in others, and that He wills by means of a will that has been brought into existence for no effective purpose *[lā fī maḥall]*.
- That He (Exalted is He) may wish for something contrary to that which has been fixed by His own predetermination *[yurīdu khilāfa maʿlūmih]*.
- That He may want from His servants something that will never come to be, while something that He does not wish may actually come into being.
- That He (Exalted is He) is powerless to influence the decisions made by others, and that the very idea of His exercising such influence is really quite absurd.
- That He does not create the actions of His servants, since they themselves, not their Lord, are the creators of those actions.
- That much of the food consumed as nourishment by a human being is not made available to him by the providence of Allāh—not, that is, in the case where the food is unlawful *[ḥarām]*, since the only food provided by Allāh is that which is lawful *[ḥalāl]*, to the exclusion of what is unlawful.

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[95] See above, pp. 171–83.

Concerning the ritual prayer called *ṣalāt at-tarāwīḥ*: how it was practiced in the time of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and how it came to be more strictly observed during the Caliphate of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

The ritual prayer called *ṣalāt at-tarāwīḥ* [258] was originally instituted as an occasional and voluntary practice, to be observed in accordance with the exemplary custom *[sunna]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). After he had performed it in congregation on one night [in the month of Ramaḍān]—(some say two nights, while others say three)—the believers expected him to join them again, but he did not emerge from his apartment when the next night came around. In order to explain his behavior, he told them later: "If I had come out to join you, it would surely have been imposed upon you as an obligatory religious duty *[la-furiḍat ʿalai-kum]*."

It was eventually established as a regular congregational practice [throughout the month of Ramaḍān], but not until the days of the Caliphate of ʿUmar [ibn al-Khaṭṭāb] (may Allāh be well pleased with him). This accounts for the fact that it is often attributed to the Caliph ʿUmar, on the grounds that he was the first to organize its performance along these lines.

The following tradition *[ḥadīth]* is particularly relevant to this topic, since it has been transmitted from ʿĀʾisha, the Mother of the Believers

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[258] The Arabic word *tarwīḥa* (of which *tarāwīḥ* is the plural form) means "a pause for rest." The *ṣalāt at-tarāwīḥ* is a special form of the Islāmic ritual prayer, performed at some period of the night in the month of Ramaḍān, after the obligatory late-night prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ]*. It consists of twenty cycles *[rakaʿāt]* (or thirty-six, according to the Mālikī school of Islāmic law), and takes its name from the pauses for rest that occur after every fourth cycle. (The salutation *[taslīma]* is pronounced at the end of each set of two cycles.)

[Umm al-Mu'minīn] (may Allāh be well pleased with her), who is reported as having said:

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once left the house in the middle of the night, in the month of Ramaḍān. He went out to pray in the mosque *[masjid]*, where he led the people in the performance of a ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. When the next night came around, however, there were so many people present that the mosque could hardly accommodate the entire congregation, so he did not leave home to join them, although he did go out later, in time for the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]*. Then, once he had performed the dawn prayer, he turned toward the people and said to them:

"'I was well aware of your situation this past night, but I was afraid that the nighttime ritual prayer *[ṣalāt al-lail]* might be made incumbent upon you as an obligatory religious duty, and that you would prove to be incapable of fulfilling such an obligation.'"

'Ā'isha, the Mother of the Believers *[Umm al-Mu'minīn]* (may Allāh be well pleased with her), then went on to say:

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would always encourage the believers to observe the practices of wakefulness and worship that enliven the nights of Ramaḍān *[fī iḥyā' Ramaḍān]*, but without commanding them to regard such observance as a matter of strict injunction *['azīma]*. The moment came when Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was destined to conclude his earthly life *[tuwuffiya]*, and the same approach was then adopted throughout the Caliphate of Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth *[aṣ-Ṣiddīq]* (may Allāh be well pleased with him), and on into the early period of the Caliphate of 'Umar [ibn al-Khaṭṭāb] (may Allāh be well pleased with him)."

'Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

"'Umar [ibn al-Khaṭṭāb] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) would never have taken such a serious interest in these *tarāwīḥ* prayers, if it had not been for a certain saying *[ḥadīth]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), which he happened to hear from me."

By making this statement, 'Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) prompted his listeners to ask: "What is that saying *[ḥadīth]*, O Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Muʾminīn]*?" So he responded by telling them: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said, in my hearing:

> "'Around the Heavenly Throne *[ʿArsh]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) maintains an area called the Enclosure of Sanctity *[Ḥaẓīrat al-Quds]*,[259] which consists of radiant light. So many are the angels within its confines, that none but Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) could ever add up their total number. These angels are utterly devoted to the worshipful service *[ʿibāda]* of Allāh (Exalted is He), and they never take a single moment to relax. When the nights of the month of Ramaḍān come around, they ask their Lord for permission to descend by turns to the earth below, where they perform the ritual prayers *[yuṣallūna]* together with the children of Adam. Whenever any member of the Community of Muḥammad is touched by them, or touches them, that person will experience such blissful happiness and good fortune that he will never again feel miserable or suffer distress.'

"As soon as ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) heard me repeat these words, he exclaimed: 'Since we are specially entitled to receive this blessing, we must be better prepared!' He then proceeded to organize the congregational observance of the *tarāwīḥ* prayers,[260] and it was he who established the practice of performing them [throughout the month of Ramaḍān] as a regular traditional custom."

As we know from another traditional report, ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) went out in the first part of a certain night in the month of Ramaḍān. Then, when he heard the Qurʾān being recited in the mosques *[masājid]*, he exclaimed: "May Allāh fill the tomb of ʿUmar with light, as Allāh's mosques are illuminated by the recitation of the Qurʾān!"[261]

According to a somewhat differently worded version of this traditional report, ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) passed by the mosques, and he noticed that they were bright with lamps, while people were performing the *tarāwīḥ* prayers, so he exclaimed:

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[259] In most English-Arabic dictionaries, the meaning given for *Ḥaẓīrat al-Quds* is simply "Paradise." For other terms derived, like *quds* [sanctity, holiness], from the three-consonant root *q-d-s*, see note 256 on p. 123 above.

[260] According to A.J. Wensinck, who cites the authority of al-Bukhārī:

"ʿUmar is said to have been the first to assemble behind one *qāriʾ* [reciter of the Qurʾān] those who performed their prayers in the mosque of al-Madīna singly or in groups; he is also said to have preferred the first part of the night for these pious exercises." (See *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islām*, art. TARĀWĪḤ.)

[261] **Author's note:** The Caliph ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having uttered the same invocation, under similar circumstances.

sleeping!" He kept his vow by fasting every day for a week, then he mounted an ash-colored camel and rode to Mecca, where he arrived on the day of the Major Pilgrimage *[al-Ḥajj al-Akbar]*.[99] He had said: "I firmly intend to go [as a pilgrim] to the House of Allāh, and to ask Allāh for His help in dealing with you!" And so it came to pass. Having arrived in Mecca on the day of the Major Pilgrimage, he invoked a curse upon me. While clinging to the curtains draped over the Ka'ba, he said [in rhymed and metrical Arabic]:

"""O You to whom the pilgrims have come from afar,
hoping for the gracious favor of One who is Mighty, Single, Everlasting!

This Munāzil will not refrain from treating me abusively,
so exact what is due to me, O Merciful One, from my own son!

Paralyze one side of him, as a generous gift from You,
O You who are Most Holy, the One who was not begotten and does not beget!""

"Munāzil went on to say: 'By the One who holds the heaven aloft and causes the water to flow, no sooner had my father uttered these words than my right side was stricken with paralysis! I was left lying around like a piece of discarded timber in the vicinity of the Sanctuary, and people kept coming to see me out of curiosity. They would tell one another: "This man's condition is due to his father's appeal, which Allāh accepted and put into effect."'

"The Commander of the Believers (may Allāh be well pleased with him) asked him: 'What did your father do next?'

"Munāzil replied: 'O Commander of the Believers, I begged him to invoke Allāh's blessing upon me, in the very same places where he had invoked the curse upon me. This was after he had come to regard me with approval, so he responded positively to my request. He installed me beside him on the back of a she-camel, and the beast kept going at a steady pace until we reached a dry river bed called Thornbush Valley *[Wādi 'l-Arāk]*. It was then that a startled bird flew out of a tree. The she-camel bolted and my father fell from her back. He died right there on the road.'

"'Alī then said (may Allāh be well pleased with him): 'Would you like me to teach you some prayers of supplication? I learned them from Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who told me: "Whenever these prayers are offered by someone who is sorely distressed,

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[99] The Major Pilgrimage *[al-Ḥajj al-Akbar]* is a more solemn occasion than the Lesser Pilgrimage or Visitation *['Umra]* (see note 41 on p. 26 above).

On why it is considered preferable to perform the *tarāwīḥ* prayers in congregation, and to recite the Qurʾān in a clearly audible voice in the course of their performance. On when and why the recitation of the Sūra of the Clot of Blood *[Sūrat al-ʿAlaq]* is recommended.

It is considered preferable to perform the *tarāwīḥ* prayers in congregation *[jamāʿa]*, and to recite the Qurʾān in a clearly audible voice *[jahr]* in the course of their performance, because this is how the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed them during those nights of the month of Ramaḍān.

As for the initial performance of the *tarāwīḥ* prayer, this should take place on the night preceding the glow of the first morning to dawn in Ramaḍān, because that night is actually one of the nights of the month of Ramaḍān, and because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) acted accordingly.

The nightly performance of the *tarāwīḥ* should begin after the obligatory prayer *[ṣalāt al-farḍ]*[263] has been followed by [a customary prayer of] two cycles *[rakʿatain]* with a ritual salutation *[taslīma]*[264] at the end of the second cycle, because this is how the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) went about it.

The *tarāwīḥ* prayer consists of twenty cycles *[rakʿa]*. At the conclusion of each set of two cycles, the worshipper sits and performs the ritual salutation *[taslīma]*. There are five pauses for rest *[tarwīḥāt]* in the whole performance, since there is one pause *[tarwīḥa]* after each set of four cycles.

Whether he is praying alone, or as leader *[imām]* of the congregation, or as one who is following such a leader,[265] the worshipper must formulate his intention *[niyya]* at the beginning of each set of two cycles *[rak'atain]*. In other words, he must say to himself: "I am about to perform two cycles of the customary *tarāwīḥ* prayer."[266]

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[263] The obligatory prayer referred to here is the late evening prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ]*, the last of the five daily prayers, which is customarily followed by a voluntary prayer of two cycles *[rakʿatain]*.

[264] See note 65 on p. 35 above.

At the appropriate point in the first cycle, when the *tarāwīḥ* prayer is performed on the first night of the month of Ramaḍān, the recommended Qur'ānic recitation consists of the Opening Sūra *[al-Fātiḥa]* and the Sūra of the Clot of Blood *[Sūrat al-'Alaq]*, which reads:

Recite:	*iqra'*
In the Name of your Lord who created,	*bismi Rabbi-ka 'lladhī khalaq:*
created man from a clot of blood.	*khalaqa 'l-insāna min 'alaq.*
Recite: And your Lord is the Most	*iqra' wa Rabbu-ka 'l-Akram:*
Generous, who has taught by the Pen,	*alladhī 'allama bi'l-Qalam:*
taught Man that which he did not know.	*'allama 'l-insāna mā lam ya'lam.*
No indeed; Man does exceed	*kallā inna 'l-insāna*
the proper bounds,	*la-yaṭghā*
in that he regards himself	*an ra'ā-hu*
as self-sufficient.	*'staghnā.*
Surely unto your Lord is the return.	*inna ilā Rabbi-ka 'r-ruj'ā.*
Have you seen him who forbids	*a-ra'aita 'lladhī yanhā*
a servant when he prays?	*'abdan idhā ṣallā.*
Have you seen if he is	*a-ra'aita in kāna*
on the [path of] guidance,	*'ala 'l-hudā*
or if he is enjoining dutiful devotion?	*au amara bi't-taqwā.*
Have you seen if he denies	*a-ra'aita in kadhdhaba*
[the truth] and turns away?	*wa tawallā.*
Is he then unaware that Allāh sees?	*a-lam ya'lam bi-anna 'llāha yarā.*
No indeed, if he does not desist,	*kallā la-in lam yantahi*
We shall seize him by the forelock,	*la-nasfa'an bi'n-nāṣiya*
a lying, sinful forelock.	*nāṣiyatin kādhibatin khāṭi'a*
Then let him call upon his henchmen!	*fa'l-yad'u nādiya*
We shall call on the guards of Hell.	*sa-nad'u 'z-zabāniya*
No indeed, do not obey him, but bow	*kallā lā tuṭi'-hu wa 'sjud*
down low, and draw near [to Allāh].	*wa 'qtarib*
(96:1–19)	

The reason for this recommendation is that the Sūra of the Clot of Blood *[Sūrat al-'Alaq]* was the very first Sūra of the Qur'ān to be revealed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)—according to our own Imām, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥanbal[267] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), and likewise in the opinion of all the other Imāms (may Allāh's good pleasure [*riḍwān*] be upon them all).

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[265] In Arabic, the term *ma'mūm* is used to denote someone who performs the ritual prayer behind an *imām*. (Both words are derived from the same triconsonantal root <'—m—m> as the preposition *amāma*, which means "in front of.")

[266] In Arabic, this formula reads: *uṣallī rak'atai 't-tarāwīḥi 'l-masnūna.*

On reaching the end of this Sūra, the Qur'ān-reciter must perform an act of prostration [*sajda*]. Then he must resume an upright posture, and start reciting the Sūra of the Cow [*Sūrat al-Baqara*].

The recitation of the complete text [*khatma*] of the Book is recommended, in order that—[in the course of the month of Ramaḍān]—the people may hear the whole of the Qur'ān, and so become acquainted with all the commandments, prohibitions, exhortations and warnings contained therein. The recitation of more than one *khatma* is not recommended, however, since that might place too great a strain upon the believers [*mu'minīn*]. Their feelings of irritation and discomfort would lead to boredom, and they might even shun the congregation altogether, having found their attendance to be a thoroughly unpleasant and burdensome experience. If this were to happen, they would miss the opportunity to gain a mighty recompense and obtain an abundant reward. The imām would be to blame for this, so his sin [*ithm*] would be tremendous, and he would be counted among the sinners [*āthimīn*].

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was addressing this very problem, when he said to Mu'ādh [ibn Jabal][268] (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "Are you a fiendish tempter [*fattān*], O Mu'ādh?" The incident arose because Mu'ādh had so prolonged the Qur'ānic recitation, while leading a group of people in prayer, that one of them stopped praying and walked away, then lodged a complaint about the situation with the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

It is considered appropriate to postpone the nighttime prayer called *witr* [269] until after the *tarāwīḥ* prayer has been completed. In the first cycle *[rak'a]* of the *witr* prayer, the recommended Qur'ānic recitation is the Sūra of the Most High *[Sūrat al-A'lā]*, which reads:

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[267] See note 212 on p. 107 above.

[268] Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān Mu'ādh ibn Jabal ibn 'Amr ibn Aws al-Khazrajī (d. A.H. 17 or 18). One of the earliest believers, he became a learned and active Companion.

[269] The term *witr* [lit., odd number] is used to denote the ritual prayer, consisting of an odd number of cycles, that is performed after the late evening prayer [*ṣalāt al-'ishā'*] and before the dawn of day [*ṣubḥ*]. The number of cycles is usually three, five, or seven, but may be as many as thirteen. Performance of the *witr* prayer is considered customary [*sunna*] by most traditional authorities, with the exception of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who took a stricter view. According to the Ḥanafī school [*madhhab*] of Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*], the observance of the *witr* prayer is classed as necessary [*wājib*]. (See: A.J. Wensinck, art. WITR in *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*; and: Thomas Patrick Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, art. WITR.)

Glorify the Name of your Lord	*sabbiḥi 'sma Rabbi-ka 'l-A'lā:*
the Most High who created,	*alladhī khalaqa fa-sawwā:*
and then shaped, and who	*wa 'lladhī*
determined, then guided;	*qaddara fa-hadā*
and who brought forth	*wa 'lladhī akhraja 'l-mar'ā:*
the pasturage, then turned it	*fa-ja'ala-hu*
into rust-colored stubble.	*ghuthā'an aḥwā.*
We shall make you recite	*sa-nuqri'u-ka*
[O Muhammad]	
so that you shall not forget	*fa-lā tansā*
save that which Allāh wills.	*illā mā shā'a 'llāh:*
He surely knows what is spoken aloud	*inna-hu ya'lamu 'l-jahra*
and that which is kept hidden;	*wa mā yakhfā.*
and We shall ease your way	*wa nuyassiru-ka*
unto the state of ease.	*li'l-yusrā.*
Therefore remind,	*fa-dhakkir*
in case the reminder brings	*in nafa'ati*
some benefit.	*'dh-dhikrā*
He who fears will remember,	*sa-yadhdhakkaru man yakhshā*
but the most wretched will flout it,	*wa yatajannabu-ha 'l-ashqā*
he who will roast in the Great Fire,	*alladhī yaṣla 'n-nāra 'l-kubrā*
in which he then will neither die	*thumma lā yamūtu*
nor live.	*fī-hā wa lā yaḥyā.*
Successful is he who purifies himself,	*qad aflaḥa man tazakkā*
and remembers the Name of his Lord,	*wa dhakara 'sma Rabbi-hi*
and then performs the prayer.	*fa-ṣallā.*
But you prefer the life of this	*bal tu'thirūna 'l-ḥayāta*
lower world,	*'d-dunyā*
although the Hereafter is better	*wa 'l-ākhiratu khairun*
and more lasting.	*wa abqā*
Surely this is in the ancient scrolls:	*inna hādhā la-fi 's-Suḥufi 'l-ūlā*
the scrolls of Abraham and Moses.	*Suḥufi Ibrāhīma wa Mūsā.*
(87:1–19)	

In the second cycle *[rak'a]* of the *witr* prayer, the recommended Qur'ānic recitation is the Sūra called "the Unbelievers" *[Sūrat al-Kāfirūn]*, which reads:

Say: "O unbelievers,	*qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn.*
I do not worship what you worship,	*lā a'budu mā ta'budūn.*
and you are not worshipping	*wa lā antum 'ābidūna*
that which I worship;	*mā a'bud:*

nor shall I worship	*wa lā ana ʿābidun*
what you have worshipped,	*mā ʿabadtum:*
neither will you worship	*wa lā antum ʿābidūna*
that which I worship.	*mā aʿbud.*
To you your religion,	*la-kum dīnu-kum*
and to me my religion!" (109:1–6)	*wa liya dīn.*

In the third cycle *[rakʿa]* of the *witr* prayer, the recommended Qurʾānic recitation is the Sūra of Sincere Devotion *[Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ]*, which reads:

Say: "He is Allāh, One!	*qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad:*
Allāh, the Everlasting Refuge!	*Allāhu 'ṣ-Ṣamad.*
He does not beget,	*lam yalid.*
nor was He begotten;	*wa lam yūlad:*
and there is none	*wa lam yakun la-hu*
comparable unto Him." (112:1–4)	*kufuwan aḥad.*

The postponement of the *witr* is recommended on the grounds that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) established this sequence for the performance of the prayers [during the nights of the month of Ramaḍān].

Subject to disapproval is the practice of inserting supererogatory devotions *[tanaffful]* between each set of four cycles in the *tarāwīḥ* prayer. It is also considered reprehensible to perform the *tarāwīḥ* prayer in two different mosques.[270]

According to one of the two accounts [of the Ḥanbalī doctrine on the subject], the same stricture applies to the performance of supererogatory prayers *[nawāfil]* in congregation, immediately after the *tarāwīḥ* prayer has been concluded, because this amounts to relentless tagging *[taʿaqqub]*,[271] which is a reprehensible practice *[makrūh]* in the view of Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal][272] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him). This practice was certainly frowned upon by Anas ibn Mālik[273] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), for, as we know from traditional reports, he would take a slight nap, then wake up and perform as many voluntary devotions [*nawāfil wa tahajjud*] as he saw fit, and then resume his dozing for a while. Besides, it is vigil in the first part of the night [*nāshi'at al-lail*][274] that Allāh has commended most highly, and that He has mentioned specifically, for He has told us:[275]

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[270] What this means, presumably, is that it is considered reprehensible to perform the *tarāwīḥ* prayer in one mosque, then go to another mosque on the same night, and there repeat the performance.

[271] In the age of the automobile, the term "tailgating" springs to mind as a possible rendering of *taʿaqqub*.

[272] See note 212 on p. 107 above.

[273] See note 35 on p. 24 above.

[Keeping vigil in] the first part	*inna nāshi'ata 'l-*
of the night	*laili*
is more potent in impact	*hiya ashaddu waṭ'an*
and more certain where speech	*wa aqwamu qīlā*
is concerned. (73:6)	

According to the second of the two accounts [of the Ḥanbalī doctrine], the practice described above is classed as permissible [*jā'iz*], rather than reprehensible [*makrūh*]. It is nevertheless preferable to allow an interval to elapse, in view of the fact that 'Umar [ibn al-Khaṭṭāb] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "You claim that the best of the night is the last part of it. Well, let me tell you, the time when you get some sleep is more agreeable, as far as I am concerned, than the time when you are all up and awake!"

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[274] The Qur'ānic expression *nāshi'at al-lail* has been variously interpreted by the traditional authorities. According to some, it has the same meaning as *qiyām al-lail* [keeping vigil by night], while others say that it signifies "the first part, or the first hours, of the night"; or, "every hour of the night in which one rises"; or, "rising after sleeping, in the first part of the night." (See. E.W. Lane, *English-Arabic Lexicon*, art. *N–SH–'*.)

These different interpretations are reflected in the renderings adopted in several English translations of the Qur'ān. Thus we find: "The vigil of the night" (M.M. Pickthall, *op. cit.*, p. 772), "The rising by night" (A. Yusuf Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 1633, and Maulana Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 1112), "The first part of the night" (A.J. Arberry, *op. cit.*, p. 614).

[275] In one of his recorded talks, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has provided the following commentary on the vigil referred to in this verse [*āya*] of the Qur'ān:

> This refers not only to giving up sleep in the ordinary sense, but also to giving up the sleep of involvement with creatures, the lower self [*nafs*], natural inclination [*ṭab'*], passion [*hawā*] and willfulness [*irāda*]. For its food and drink the heart is left with speaking confidentially [*munājāt*] to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), standing [*qiyām*] and bowing [*rukū'*] and making prostration [*sujūd*] in His presence.

(See: Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī. *Utterances* [*Malfūẓāt*]. Translated by Muhtar Holland. Houston, Texas: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 1992; p. 31.)

Some concluding remarks concerning the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*, and concerning the month of Ramaḍān as a whole.

On the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*, as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

The angels and the Spirit come down. (97:4)	*tanazzalu 'l-malā'ikatu wa 'r-Rūḥ.*

In other words, Gabriel (peace be upon him), who is the Spirit *[Rūḥ]*, comes down with an escort of seventy thousand angels, whom he leads as their commanding officer *[amīr]*.

Once they have descended from heaven to the earth below, Gabriel (peace be upon him) will give the greeting of peace to anyone who happens to be in a sitting posture, while the angels will give the greeting of peace to anyone who happens to be sleeping. At the same time, the Maker *[al-Bāri']* (Glorified and Exalted is He) will bestow the salutation of peace upon those of His servants who are standing upright.

It is certainly possible to conceive that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will bestow the salutation of peace upon those believing servants of His *['ibādi-hi 'l-mu'minīn]* who are worthy to inhabit the Garden of Paradise, for He has indicated that He will say to them, within the confines of the Garden:

"Peace!"—such is the greeting from a Lord All-Compassionate. (36:58)	*salāmun: qawlan min Rabbin Raḥīm.*

By the same token, it is also conceivable that He will bestow the salutation of peace, here in this lower world, upon those righteous servants of His *['ibādi-hi 'l-abrār]*:

unto whom the reward most fair has already gone forth from Us. (21:101)	*alladhīna sabaqat la-hum min-na 'l-ḥusnā.*

In other words, it is conceivable because the blessings of providence *['ināya]* and felicity *[sa'āda]* have already been conferred by Him, in the eternity without beginning *[fi 'l-azal]*, upon those who are extinct to the creation *[fānīn 'ani 'l-khalq]*, existing in perpetuity with the Lord *[bāqīn bi'r-Rabb]*, and steadfastly reliant on the Truth *[mutma'innīn ila 'l-Ḥaqq]*.

When the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* comes around, there will not be a single spot on earth that does not have an angel upon it, either bowing down in prostration, or standing erect, as he offers prayers of supplication on behalf of the believing men *[mu'minīn]* and the believing women *[mu'mināt]*. There will be no exceptions, apart from any church *[kanīsa]*, or any synagogue *[bī'a]*,[276] or any temple dedicated to the worship of fire, or any temple dedicated to the worship of idols, or certain places where people dispose of their filthy trash.

Those angels will dedicate every moment of their night on earth to offering prayers of supplication on behalf of the believing men *[mu'minīn]* and the believing women *[mu'mināt]*. As for Gabriel (peace be upon him), he will not leave any believer, male or female, without giving him [or her] the greeting of peace and shaking him [or her] by the hand. To each and every one of them, he will say: "If you are in a state of worshipful obedience, peace be upon you, in the form of the approval and favor you deserve! If you are in a state of sinful disobedience, peace be upon you, in the form of forgiveness! If you are in a state of sleep, peace be upon you, in the form of contentment! If you are in the grave or tomb, peace be upon you, in the form of refreshment *[rauḥ]* and sweet perfume *[raiḥān]*!"

This, according to one interpretation, is the import of the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> On every errand: Peace.... *min kulli amr—salāmun...*
> (97:4,5)

Another interpretation has been expressed as follows:

"The angels will surely convey the greeting of peace to all worthy practitioners of worshipful obedience, but they will not offer that same salutation to all who are guilty of sinful disobedience, for some of them are perpetrators of heinous wrongdoing and injustice *[ẓalama]*, who deserve no share in the peace conveyed by the angels. Grievous indeed is the offense committed by the consumer of unlawful sustenance *[ākil al-ḥarām]*, the breaker of family ties *[qāṭi' ar-raḥm]*, the spreader of malicious gossip and slander *[nammām]*, and the consumer of goods that rightfully belong to orphans *[ākil amwāl al-yatāmā]*. The likes of these are therefore not entitled to any share in the peace conveyed by the angels, and none shall they receive."

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[276] In an earlier chapter of the present work, there is some evidence to suggest that Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used *kanīsa* to denote a church, and *bī'a* to denote a synagogue. (See Vol. 1, p. 128.) According to some Arabic lexicographers, however, the term *bī'a* applies to a Christian church, and *kanīsa* to a Jewish synagogue. Yet others say that *kanīsa* may be applied to either of these, or that it means a place of worship used by the followers of any religion other than Islām.

What calamity could be worse than this terrible disaster? What a dreadful affliction it must be, to live through a month—'the beginning of which is a mercy, the middle of which is a forgiveness, and the last part of which is a deliverance from the Fire of Hell'[277]—and yet find yourself excluded from sharing in the peace conveyed therein by the angels of the Lord of the sinners and the righteous *[Rabb al-'uṣāt wa 'l-abrār]*!

What could have brought this affliction upon you? Was it due to your remoteness from the All-Merciful One *[ar-Raḥmān]*, to your being an agent of tyranny *[aṭ-ṭughyān]* and a willing accomplice of the Devil *[ash-Shaiṭān]*, and to your having adopted the flamboyant style of those who tread the path that leads to the Fires of Hell *[an-nīrān]*? Was it due to your remoteness and aloofness from those who tread the path that leads to the Gardens of Paradise *[al-jinān]*, and your extreme reluctance to obey the One who controls both the infliction of harm and the bestowal of benefit *[al-iḥsān]*?

The month of Ramaḍān is the month of serenity and purity *[shahr aṣ-ṣafā']*, the month of fulfillment and fidelity *[shahr al-wafā']*. It is the month of those who practice the remembrance of their Lord *[shahr adh-dhākirīn]*, the month of those who endure with patience *[shahr aṣ-ṣābirīn]*, and the month of those who are honest and truthful *[shahr aṣ-ṣādiqīn]*. So, if it does not have the effect of improving your heart—if it does not induce you to desist from rebellious acts against your Lord, and does not make you avoid the company of troublemakers and criminals—what else can exert a positive influence on your heart? What goodness can be hoped for in a case like yours? What redeeming quality can survive in someone like you? What successful outcome can be expected from an individual like you?

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[277] See p. 85 above, where the month of Ramaḍān is so described in a saying attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

You had better pay attention, O miserable wretch, and try to learn from what has happened to you. Come to your senses, wake up from your slumber, shake off your heedless indifference, and take a good hard look at what has befallen you. However little of the month you still have left, you must seize every opportunity for repentance *[tauba]* and contrition *[ināba]*.[278] Take full advantage of the time that is still available for seeking forgiveness *[istighfār]* and practicing worshipful obedience *[ṭā'a]*. If you follow this advice, you may yet be one of those who receive the blessings of mercy *[raḥma]* and compassionate grace *[ra'fa]*.

Then, when the month of Ramaḍān comes to its close, you should bid it farewell with the shedding of copious tears. You should weep over your unfortunate self, while moaning and wailing and uttering plaintive cries of lamentation. For, as you must be well aware, many a keeper of the fast *[ṣā'im]* will never keep another fast, and many a keeper of the vigil *[qā'im]* will never keep vigil again.

The worker will be paid his wages, once he has finished his work, and we have now finished the work [required of us in the month of Ramaḍān]. But if only I knew for certain whether our fasting *[ṣiyām]* and our vigil *[qiyām]* have been accepted, or whether they will be used to slap us in our faces! If only I knew for certain which of us has been accepted, so that we may congratulate him, and which of us has been rejected, so that we may offer him our condolences!

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> There is many a one who keeps the fast by day, yet who gets nothing out of his fasting but hunger and thirst. And there is many a one who spends the night in vigil and prayer, yet who gets nothing from his vigil other than insomnia.

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[278] See note 189 on p. 97 above.

Peace be upon you, O month of daytime fasting!
as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'ṣ-ṣiyām

Peace be upon you, O month of nighttime vigil!
as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-qiyām

Peace be upon you, O month of true faith!
as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-īmān

Peace be upon you, O month of the Qur'ān!
as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-Qur'ān

Peace be upon you, O month of the radiant lights!
as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-anwār

Peace be upon you, O month of forgiveness and pardon!
as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-maghfirati wa 'l-ghufrān

Peace be upon you, O month of the ascending steps
of Paradise and of salvation from the descending steps of Hell!
as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'd-darajāt wa 'n-najāti mina 'd-darakāt

Peace be upon you, O month of the worshipful penitents!
as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 't-tā'ibīna 'l-'ābidīn

Peace be upon you, O month of those who know
from spiritual experience!
as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-'ārifīn

Peace be upon you, O month of those who exercise
discriminating judgment!
as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-mujtahidīn

Peace be upon you, O month of safety and security!
as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-amān.

You are a prison for disobedient sinners, and for the truly
devout you are a place of comfort.

Peace be upon the lamps and lanterns that shine so bright! Peace be upon the sleepless eyes, and upon the streaming tears! Peace be upon the illuminated niches *[mahārīb]* in the mosques, and upon the tears that are spilled and shed! Peace be upon the sighs that arise from hearts that are aflame!

Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Your Lord creates and chooses what He wills. (28:68)
wa Rabbuka yakhluqu mā yashā'u wa yakhtār.

Thus Allāh (Exalted is He) has selected four out of each kind of thing, then He has chosen one of the four:

From among the Angels, He selected Gabriel *[Jibrīl]*, Michael *[Mīkā'īl]*, Isrāfīl and 'Azrā'īl, then He chose Gabriel from these four.

From all the Prophets (peace be upon them), the four He selected were Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (Allāh bless them all, and give them peace), then of these He chose Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

The four He selected from among the Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them) were Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī, and His preferred choice was Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

The four mosques: The Sanctuary Mosque [by the Ka'ba in Mecca], al-Aqṣā Mosque [in Jerusalem], the Mosque of Medina the Ennobled City, and the Mosque of Mount Sinai. Of these He chose the Sanctuary Mosque *[al-Masjid al-Ḥarām]*.

The four days: The Day of Breaking Fast *[Yaum al-Fiṭr]*, the Day of Sacrifice *[Yaum al-Aḍḥā]*,[108] the Day of 'Arafa,[109] and the Day of 'Āshūrā'.[110] Of these He then chose the Day of 'Arafa.

The four nights: The Night of Absolution *[Lailat al-Barā'a]*,[111] the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*, the Night of Friday Congregation *[Lailat al-Jum'a]*,[112] and the Night of the Festival *[Lailat al-'Īd]*. Of these He chose the Night of Power.

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[108] The Day of Sacrifice *[Yaum al-Aḍḥā]* is the tenth day of Dhu'l-Ḥijja, the month of Pilgrimage.

[109] The Day of 'Arafa *[Yaum 'Arafa]* is the ninth day of Dhu'l-Ḥijja, the month of Pilgrimage.

[110] The Day of 'Āshūrā' *[Yaum 'Āshūrā']* is the tenth day of Muharram, which is the first month of the year in the Islāmic calendar. See pp. 278–94 below.

[111] The Night of Absolution *[Lailat al-Barā'a]* is discussed on pp. 60–68 below.

[112] The Day of Congregational Prayer *[al-Jum'a]* is Friday—but please remember that Friday night in the Islāmic calendar is the night that begins at sunset on Thursday!

Concerning *zakāt al-fiṭr*[279] [the special alms-due that becomes payable immediately after the end of the month of Ramaḍān].[280]

Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us [in a passage of the Qur'ān that is generally believed to concern the immediate aftermath of the month of Ramaḍān]:

Successful is he who purifies himself, and remembers the Name of his Lord, and then performs the prayer. (87:14,15)	*qad aflaḥa man tazakkā* *wa dhakara 'sma Rabbi-hi* *fa-ṣallā.*

Let us therefore consider how these words of His may be interpreted:

1. "Successful is he" *[qad aflaḥa]*:

In this context, success *[falāḥ]* can be understood to mean either the attainment *[fawz]* of the Garden of Paradise, along with salvation *[najāt]* from the Fires of Hell in the Hereafter, and from disasters and afflictions in this world; or prosperity *[yumn]* and good fortune *[sa'āda]* in this world—as the happy outcome of worshipful obedience—and permanent survival *[khulūd]* in the Gardens of Paradise in the Other World.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has also said:

Successful are the true believers. (23:1)	*qad aflaḥa 'l-mu'minūn*

In other words, they are fortunate *[su'idū]*.

2. "Successful is he who purifies himself" *[qad aflaḥa man tazakkā]*:

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[279] For a satisfactory understanding of the points discussed in this subsection, it is important to be aware that the Arabic noun *zakāt*, the verb *tazakkā*, and the participle *zakī*, are all derived from the same three-consonant root—*z-k-w*—which conveys the basic notion of "healthy growth" or "purification and development."

[280] In an earlier chapter of the present work, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has provided a detailed account of the rules governing the payment of *zakāt al-fiṭr*. (See Vol. 1, p. 20.)

That is to say, successful is he who is enabled to achieve the state of purity *[wuffiqa li'z-zakāt]*, and to cleanse his faith *[īmān]* and his devotion *[taqwā]* of all sinful stains. There can be no success *[falāḥ]* for anyone who fails to become purified. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

> Surely the guilty are never successful. *inna-hu lā yufliḥu 'l-mujrimūn.* (10:17)

As for the proper interpretation of His words "*man tazakkā*," this has been the subject of some disagreement among the traditional authorities:

According to Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the expression signifies: "he who cleanses himself *[man taṭahhara]* of polytheistic association *[shirk]*, by means of true faith *[īmān]*."

It was al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī][281] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "The expression '*man tazakkā*' means: 'he who is righteous *[ṣāliḥ]*, and whose good work is thriving *[zākī]* and growing.'"

Abu 'l-Ahwas said: "I take it to mean: '[he who pays] the general alms-due *[zakāt]* on all goods and property.'"[282]

Qatāda[283] and 'Aṭā'[284] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them) both said: "Allāh intended it to convey the very specific meaning: '[he who pays] the *zakāt al-fiṭr* [the special alms-due that becomes payable immediately after the end of Ramaḍān, i.e., at the time of fast-breaking], as distinct from any other.'"

3. "and remembers the Name of his Lord, and then performs the prayer." *[wa dhakara 'sma Rabbi-hi fa-ṣallā]*.

Here again, the proper interpretation has been the subject of some disagreement among the traditional authorities:

According to Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the meaning is: "[and] affirms the Oneness *[waḥḥada]* of Allāh (Exalted is He), and performs the five daily prayers *[ṣalla 'ṣ-ṣalawāti 'l-khams]*."

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[281] See note 74 on p. 40 above.

[282] According to this interpretation, the verb *tazakkā* relates to the Alms-due *[Zakāt]* that constitutes one of the Five Pillars of Islām. (See Vol. 1, pp. 17–19.)

[283] See note 175 on p. 92 above.

[284] This is presumably Qatāda's contemporary, 'Aṭā' as-Sulamī/as-Sulaimī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them both), a man renowned for his extreme piety. According to some accounts, his sense of shame before Allāh (Exalted is He) was so intense that he felt unable to raise his head toward heaven. He died in A.H. 121.

According to Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī[285] (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "The expression: 'and remembers the Name of his Lord [*wa dhakara 'sma Rabbi-hi*]' refers to the affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*].[286] As for: 'and then performs the prayer [*fa-ṣallā*],' this means: 'and then goes out to celebrate the Festival [*al-'Īd*], and performs the ritual prayer [with the congregation in the mosque].'"

Wakī' ibn al-Jarrāḥ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) offered this instructive comparison:

"The alms-due called *zakāt al-fiṭr*, as it relates to Ramaḍān, is like the prostration to compensate for forgetfulness [*sajdat as-sahw*], as the latter relates to the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]."

The point he was making may be explained as follows:

When Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) prescribed payment of the alms-due called *zakāt al-fiṭr* as an obligatory religious duty, he intended it to provide the keeper of the fast [*ṣā'im*] with a cleansing instrument, by which to rid himself of moral defects. In other words, it gives the keeper of the fast an opportunity to redress the imbalance in his account, by compensating for the deficiency that has entered into him through indulgence in various forms of misbehavior, such as idle gossip [*laghw*], lewdness and sexual harassment [*rafath*],[287] telling lies [*kadhib*], backbiting [*ghība*], slanderous defamation [*namīma*], consuming substances of dubious legality [*shubuhāt*], and eyeing attractive temptations [*mustaḥsanāt*].

The post-Ramaḍān alms-due [*fiṭra*][288] has thus been established as a means of making atonement for bad habits such as these, and of completing and repairing one's observance of the fast. It may fittingly be compared, therefore, to repenting one's sins and seeking forgiveness for them, and also to bowing down in prostration [*sujūd*] as an atonement for lapsing into forgetfulness [*sahw*] during the ritual prayer. It seems highly likely that this act of prostration has been prescribed in order to spite the Devil [*Shaiṭān*], since he is the cause of the lapse into forgetfulness. We may safely assume that repentance of sinful offenses, and payment of the post-Ramadān alms-due *[fitra]*, have likewise been prescribed with a view to spiting him, because the Devil *[Shaitān]* is the cause of those acts of sinful disobedience, and of all those moral defects that tarnish the observance of the fast.

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[285] See note 159 on p. 85 above.

[286] The affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*] is expressed by declaring: "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]" These words are pronounced at the beginning of every ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]

[287] See note 83 on p. 43 above.

[288] In this context, the term *fiṭra* is simply a shorter synonym of *zakāt al-fiṭr*.

May Allāh grant refuge, to us and to all the true believers *[mu'minīn]*, from Satan's tricks and snares and pitfalls! May He keep us safe from the perils and afflictions of this world, and deliver us therefrom, by His mercy and His gracious favor! Āmīn.

with them a rich assortment of the finest pearls and sapphires *[yāqūt]*, as well as a splendid array of exquisite ornaments and garments. They will say to him by way of greeting: "O saintly friend *[walī]* of Allāh, deliverance at last! Deliverance unto your Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), for Whose sake you went thirsty during your days [of fasting in the month of Rajab], and for Whose sake you let your body become emaciated!"

"'He will thus be one of the people who enjoy priority when it comes to entering the Gardens of Eden[40] *[Jannāt 'Adn]*, for he will be in the company of those who are triumphantly successful *[fā'izīn]* (may Allāh be well pleased with them, and may they be well pleased with Him). That is what is meant by the "Mighty Triumph *[al-Fawz al-'Aẓīm]*."'[41]

"After hearing all this, the man who had asked him about fasting in the month of Rajab came up with a theoretical question: 'Supposing that, on each of the days when a person is keeping the fast, the amount available to him for almsgiving *[ṣadaqa]* is barely sufficient to provide him with his basic sustenance, should he still give it away in the form of a charitable donation?' Abū 'd-Dardā' (may Allāh be well pleased with him) found the premise of this question so utterly absurd that he responded with the threefold retort: 'Preposterous, preposterous, preposterous *[haihāt haihāt haihāt]*!' Then he went on to say: 'Even if all the creatures in the universe were to pool their resources in an effort to match the reward received by that servant [of Allāh], they could not produce as much as one tenth of the reward that Allāh has bestowed upon that servant of His!'"

'Abdu'llāh ibn az-Zubair[42] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said: "If someone relieves a believer *[mu'min]* of an anxiety during the month of Rajab, which is also

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[40] That is to say, according to the Arabic lexicographers, "the Gardens of Perpetual Abode." (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *'-D-N*.)

[41] This expression occurs in numerous verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān. Particularly relevant in the present context are the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

He will forgive you your sins	*yaghfir la-kum dhunūba-kum*
and cause you to enter Gardens	*wa yudkhil-kum jannātin tajrī*
beneath which rivers flow,	*min taḥti-ha 'l-anhāru wa masākina*
and pleasant dwellings in Gardens	*ṭayyibatan fī Jannāti 'Adn*
of Eden. That is the Mighty Triumph.	*dhālika 'l-Fawzu 'l-'Aẓīm*
(61:12)	

[42] Az-Zubair ibn al-'Awwām (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was a cousin of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and one of the earliest believers. He died in A.H. 36.

[sunna], and from the Fast of Ramaḍān to the fast of six days in the month of Shawwāl."

"It came to be called *'Īd* for the simple reason that the believers are told at that time: 'Return *['ūdū]* to your dwelling places, knowing that you have been granted forgiveness!'"

"It came to be called *'Īd* because it is an occasion for remembering the promise and the threat[291] *[al-wa'd wa 'l-wa'īd]*,[292] the Day of requital and superabundance *[al-jazā' wa 'l-mazīd]*, the Day of emancipation for the bondmaids and the male slaves *[al-imā' wa 'l-'abīd]*,[293] the approach of the Lord of Truth to His creatures near and far *[al-qarīb wa 'l-ba'īd]*, and the reality of contrition and repentance *[al-ināba wa 'l-tauba]*[294] from the feeble servant to the One who is All-Forgiving and Ever-Loving *[al-Ghafūr al-Wadūd]*."

It was Wahb ibn Munabbih (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Allāh created the Garden of Paradise on the Day of Breaking the Fast *[Yaum al-Fiṭr]*; He planted the Tree of Bliss *[Ṭūbā]*[295] on the Day of Breaking the Fast; He chose Gabriel (peace be upon him) as the conveyer of inspiration *[waḥy]* on the Day of Breaking the Fast; and the sorcerers *[saḥara]* found forgiveness on the Day of Breaking the Fast."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> When the Day of Breaking the Fast *[Yaum al-Fiṭr]* comes around, and the people emerge from their homes to pray in the open space near the burial ground *[jabbāna]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will take notice of them, and He will say: "My servants, for My sake you have kept the fast, and for My sake you have performed the prayers. Now take your leave, knowing that you have been granted forgiveness!"

According to a traditional report, transmitted on the authority of

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[291] That is to say, the promise of blissful reward in the Garden of Paradise, and the threat of terrible torment in the Fire of Hell.

[292] Although the second syllable of *wa'īd* does happen to be *'īd*, the word as a whole is derived from the root w-'-d, which conveys the basic idea of "promising."

[293] That is to say, the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*.

[294] See note 189 on p. 97 above.

[295] The *Ṭūbā* tree is traditionally depicted as having its roots in Paradise, while its leaves and branches extend downwards toward the earth. According to some accounts, one of its branches will enter the mansion of each inhabitant of the Garden of Paradise, bearing flowers and ripe fruit of every imaginable kind.

Anas ibn Mālik[296] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On the Night of Breaking the Fast *[Lailat al-Fitr]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant the recompense due to anyone who has kept the fast throughout the month of Ramadān, and He will grant that recompense in full measure. Then, in the early morning of the Day of Breaking the Fast, Allāh (Exalted is He) will give His angels their instructions. In obedience to His command, they will promptly fly down to the earth, where they will position themselves at the street corners and at the crossroads, proclaiming in a voice that is audible to all created beings, apart from the jinn and humankind: "O Community of Muhammad, come forth into the presence of your Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), who accepts the smallest offering, bestows the greatest abundance, and forgives the most terrible sin!"
>
> Then, once the believers have emerged and presented themselves at their place of prayer *[musallā]*, performed their prayers, and offered their supplications, the Lord (Blessed and Exalted is He) will make sure that they are left with no need that He has not satisfied, no request that He has not answered, and no sin that He has not forgiven. They will then return to their homes, knowing that they have been granted forgiveness.

The following saying *[hadīth]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is one of those reported on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

> When the month of Ramadān is over, and the Night of Breaking the Fast *[Lailat al-Fitr]* has arrived, that night is called the Night of the Prize *[Lailat al-Jā'iza]*. Then, in the early morning of the Day of Breaking the Fast, Allāh (Exalted is He) will send His angels forth to visit all the towns and cities on the earth below. Once they have made their descent, they will position themselves at the entrances to all the streets and alleys. There, in a voice that is audible to every being created by Allāh (Exalted is He), apart from the jinn and humankind, they will issue a proclamation, saying: "O Community of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), come forth into the presence of a Noble and Generous Lord *[Rabb Karīm]*, who will grant you gifts in abundance, and forgive your terrible sin!"
>
> Then, when the believers have emerged and presented themselves at their place of prayer *[musallā]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will say to His angels: "O My angels!" They will respond to His call by saying: "We wait intent upon Your service, time and time again, and upon aiding Your cause, time and time again *[labbaika wa sa'daik]*!"[297] Then He will say to them: "What is the recompense of the hired laborer, once he has done his job?"

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued:

> The angels will reply: "Our God *[Ilāh]* and our Master *[Sayyid]* and our Lord *[Maulā]*, You will pay him his wages in full!" So the All-Majestic One *[al-Jalīl]*

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[296] See note 35 on p. 24 above.

[297] See note 167 on p. 88 above.

> (Magnificent is His Majesty) will say: "I now call upon you to bear witness, O My angels, that I have conferred My acceptance and My forgiveness, as the reward for their fasting *[ṣiyām]* and night vigil *[qiyām]* during the month of Ramaḍān."
>
> Then He will say: "O My human servants, put your requests to Me now, for this I swear, by My Might and My Majesty: You will not ask Me this day, in this gathering of yours, for anything connected with your life hereafter, without My granting it to you; nor for anything connected with your life in this lower world, without My attending to your need. By My Might and My Majesty, I will surely condone the false steps you make, as long as you are consciously alert in the effort to avoid incurring My displeasure. By My Might and My Majesty, I will not put you to shame, nor will I expose you to disgrace amongst those who are faithfully committed to observing the statutes *[ḥudūd]*.[298] Now you may depart, knowing that you have been forgiven. You have won My approval, and I am well pleased with you."

This traditional report concludes with the following words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The angels will then be very happy, as they welcome the good news of all that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will bestow upon this Community, when its members break the fast they have kept through the month of Ramaḍān.

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[298] See note 153 on p. 83 above.

Concerning four Festivals *[A'yād]* celebrated by four peoples *[aqwām]* in the course of history.

There have been four Festivals *[A'yād]*,[299] celebrated by four peoples *[aqwām]*, namely:

1. The Festival *['Īd]* celebrated by the people of Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him).

A crucial moment in the life of Abraham (peace be upon him) is thus described in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

So he glanced a glance at the stars.	*fa-naẓara naẓratan fi 'n-nujūm*
Then he said: "Oh, I feel sick!"	*fa-qāla innī saqīm.*
(37:88,89)	

At the point when this occurred, his fellow tribesmen were going out of town for the purpose of celebrating a certain religious festival *['īd]* of theirs, but Abraham (peace be upon him) preferred to stay behind. Since he did not identify with their religion *[dīn]*, he pleaded sickness as a pretext for not joining them on their excursion. As soon as they had all departed, he armed himself with an ax and used it to smash their idols *[asnām]*. Then, when he had finished wielding the ax, he attached it to the neck of the biggest idol and left it hanging there. As for what was to happen next, from the moment when his fellow tribesmen returned, the story is told in these verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān:

They said: "Who has done this	*qālū man fa'ala hādhā bi-ālihati-nā*
to our gods? Surely it must be	*inna-hu*
one of the evildoers."	*la-mina 'ẓ-ẓālimīn.*
They said: "We heard a young man	*qālū sami'nā fatan*
making mention of them,	*yadhkuru-hum*
and he is called Abraham."	*yuqālu la-hu Ibrāhīm.*
They said: "Then bring him here	*qālū fa-'tū bi-hi*
before the people's eyes,	*'alā a'yuni 'n-nāsi*
so that they may bear witness."	*la'alla-hum yashhadūn.*

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[299] Strange as it may seem, the Arabic word *A'yād* [Festivals] is simply the plural form of *'Īd* [Festival]. (For the derivation of these and other words from the root '–w–d, see note 289 on p. 146 above.)

to every pure believing soul!	*mu'minatin zakiyya*
O He who allays the terrors	*yā Musakkina ru'bi 'l-khā'ifīna*
of the fearful and the devout!	*wa ahli 't-taqiyya*
O He in Whose Presence	*yā Man ḥawā'iju 'l-khalqi*
the needs of all creatures are fulfilled!	*'indahu maqḍiyya*
O He Who delivered Joseph	*yā Man najjā Yūsufa*
the bondage of slavery!	*min riqqi 'l-'ubūdiyya.*
O He Who has no gatekeeper	*yā Man laisa lahu*
to be called upon,	*bawwābun yunādā*
and no companion to be won over,	*wa lā ṣāḥibun yughshā*
and no minister to be bribed,	*wa lā wazīrun yu'ṭā*
and no one else	*wa lā ghairuhu*
to be addressed as a lord,	*rabbun yud'ā*
and Who does not add	*wa lā yazdādu 'alā*
to the number of requirements,	*kathrati 'l-ḥawā'iji*
except out of kindness	*illā karaman*
and generosity!	*wa jūdā.*
And may Allāh bless Muhammad	*wa ṣalla 'llāhu 'alā*
and his family.	*Muḥammadin wa ālihi*
And grant me my request,	*wa a'ṭinī su'ālī*
for You are Capable of all things!'"	*innaka 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*

"'It was then that I awoke, to find that I had been cured of my paralysis!'

"'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said: 'I urge you all to memorize this supplication thoroughly, for it is one of the treasures of the Heavenly Throne *[kanz min kunūz al-'Arsh]*.'"

Stories similar to this have been related from the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) and other periods. It would take a very long time to discuss them all in detail, but the moral, which is always essentially the same, may be summed up as follows:

No person of mature understanding *[dhū lubb]* should ever minimize the seriousness of sinful acts of disobedience *[ma'āṣī]* and acts of injustice and wrongdoing *[maẓālim]*, nor should he underestimate the effectiveness of the victim's prayer of supplication *[du'ā' al-maẓlūm]*, for, as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> [The consequence of] wrongdoing *[ẓulm]* will be murky shades of darkness *[ẓulumāt]* on the Day of Resurrection.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If the servant holds out his open palms toward Him with a prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*, Allāh will surely consider it unworthy of Him to turn those palms away

of Humankind *[Khair al-Bariyya]* (Allāh bless him and give him peace).[302]

2. The Festival *[ʿĪd]* celebrated by the people of Moses *[Mūsā]*, the Interlocutor of the All-Merciful *[Kalīm ar-Raḥmān]* (peace be upon him).

This is referred to as the Day of Grace *[Yaumu 'z-Zīna]*, in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

[Moses] said: "Your tryst shall be the Day of Grace." (20:59)	*qāla mau'idu-kum* *Yaumu 'z-Zīnati.*

The following explanation has been offered:

"It came to be called the Day of Grace *[Yaumu 'z-Zīna]* because Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) graced *[zayyana]* Moses and his people, by causing the destruction of their enemy Pharaoh *[Firʿawn]* and his people.

"Seventy-two magicians (some say seventy-three) came out into the desert, together with Pharaoh and his people, [to challenge Moses (peace be upon him) and his people]. They brought with them seven hundred staffs and ropes, and they put quicksilver *[ziʾbaq]* in the middle of the staffs, which were intertwined with the ropes. The creatures were standing out there on the sun-baked ground *[ramḍāʾ]*,[303] and the heat of the sun was extremely intense, so the quicksilver melted and the staffs caused the ropes to slither about. To the people looking on, they appeared to be slithering serpents, although they were not really moving of their own accord.

So Moses conceived a fear within him. (20:67)	*fa-awjasa fī nafsi-hi* *khīfatan Mūsā.*

"The fear he had conceived was for his people, and he expressed his deep concern by saying: 'Perhaps they will deluded into believing that what those magicians have done is really what it seems to be. If so, their faith *[īmān]* will be diminished, or they may even apostasize *[yartaddūna]*.'

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[302] We find some important details concerning this subject in Vol. 2, pp. 118, where Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) informs us that:

[In] the case of Abraham, the Special Friend of Allāh *[Ibrāhīm al-Khalīl]* (peace be upon him) . . . the fact [is] that Allāh . . . caused him to become the father and direct ancestor of so many of the Prophets *[Anbiyāʾ]* and Messengers *[Mursalīn]*. As we know from traditional reports, his own children and the offspring of his children account for no fewer than four thousand Prophets (peace be upon them all). Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

And We made his offspring the survivors. (37:77)	*wa jaʿalnā dhurriyyata-hu* *humu 'l-bāqīn.*

Even our own Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is one of his direct descendants, as are Moses and Jesus and David and Solomon (peace be upon them all), to mention only a few by name.

[303] The term *ramḍāʾ* is derived from the same three-consonant root—*r–m–ḍ*—as *Ramaḍān*. (See note 146 on p. 79 above.)

"It was then that Allāh (Exalted is He) said to Moses (peace be upon him):

And throw down your staff! (27:10)	*wa alqi 'aṣā-k.*

"So he threw it down, and lo and behold, it turned into an enormous serpent, as huge as the biggest camel that ever was! It had two eyes that were ablaze with fire, and the snarling sound it made was truly terrifying. It bore down upon the products of their sorcery, their ropes and their staffs, and gobbled them up—that is to say, it devoured them all completely—yet without being altered in the process. There was no swelling of the belly, no lessening of mobility, and no increase in either its length or its breadth.

Then the wizards were flung down prostrate. (7:120)	*wa ulqiya 's-saḥaratu* *sājidīn.*

They all bowed down low in prostration before Him (Almighty and Glorious is He), including the most important of them, whose name was Simon *[Sham'ūn]*, and they cried:

"We believe in the Lord of Aaron and Moses." (20:70)[404]	*āmannā* *bi-Rabbi Hārūna wa Mūsā.*

"In other words: 'We give credence *[ṣaddaqnā]* to Him.'

"Then the serpent bore down upon the armed forces of Pharaoh and his people, and they were routed and took to flight. By some accounts, as many as fifty thousand of them died."

The story goes on for some considerable length, but we shall leave it at this point.

3. The Festival *['Īd]* of Jesus *['Īsā]* (peace be upon him) and his people.

Let us begin by quoting these words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

When the Disciples said "O Jesus, son of Mary! Is your Lord able to send down for us a table spread with food from heaven!" he said: "Observe your duty to Allāh, if you are true believers." (5:112)	*idh qāla 'l-Ḥawāriyyūna* *yā 'Īsa 'bna Maryama* *hal yastaṭī'u Rabbu-ka an* *yunazzila 'alai-nā mā'idatan* *mina 's-samā':* *qāla 'ttaqu 'llāha* *in kuntum mu'minīn.*

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[404] If this were a continuation of the immediately preceding Qur'ānic quotation (7:120), it would read in full:

"We believe in the Lord of All the Worlds, the Lord of Moses and Aaron." (7:121,122)	*āmannā bi-Rabbi 'l-'Ālamīn:* *Rabbi Mūsā wa Hārūn.*

They said: "We wish to eat from it,	*qālū nurīdu an na'kula min-hā*
so that our hearts may be at rest,	*wa taṭma'inna qulūbu-nā*
and that we may know that you	*wa na'lama an qad*
have told us the truth, and that	*ṣadaqta-nā*
we may be among those who	*wa nakūna 'alai-hā*
are witnesses to it." (5:113)	*mina 'sh-shāhidīn.*
Jesus, son of Mary, said: "O Allāh,	*qāla 'Īsa 'bnu Maryama 'llāhumma*
our Lord, send down for us a table	*Rabba-nā anzil 'alai-nā*
spread with food from heaven,	*mā'idatan mina 's-samā'i*
so that it may be a festival for us—	*takūnu la-nā 'īdan*
for the first of us and for the last of us—	*li-awwali-nā wa ākhiri-nā*
and a sign from You.	*wa āyatan min-ka*
And provide us with sustenance,	*wa 'rzuq-nā*
for You are the Best of providers."	*wa Anta Khairu 'r-rāziqīn.*
(5:114)	
Allāh said: "I shall indeed send	*qāla 'llāhu innī munazzilu-hā*
it down for you.	*'alai-kum:*
But if anyone amongst you	*fa-man yakfur ba'du*
disbelieves thereafter,	*min-kum fa-innī*
I will surely punish him	*u'adhdhibu-hu*
with a penalty such	*'adhāban lā*
as I have never inflicted	*u'adhdhibu-hu*
on any of the peoples of the world."	*aḥadan mina 'l-'ālamīn.*
(5:115)	
But when Jesus became conscious	*fa-lammā aḥassa 'Īsā*
of their disbelief, he cried:	*min-humu 'l-kufra qāla*
"Who will be my helpers	*man anṣārī*
in the cause of Allāh?"	*ila 'llāh:*
So the Disciples said:	*qāla 'l-Ḥawāriyyūna*
"We shall be Allāh's helpers.	*naḥnu anṣāru 'llāh:*
We believe in Allāh,	*āmannā bi-'llāhi*
and you must bear witness	*wa 'shhad*
that we have surrendered	*bi-annā muslimūn*
[unto Him]." (3:52)	

We shall now provide an explanatory version of the story, drawing upon traditional commentaries and reports:[405]

The Disciples *[Ḥawāriyyūn]*[406] said: "O Jesus *[yā 'Īsā]*, is your Lord able to grant your request, if you ask Him **to send down for us a**

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[405] In the passages that follow, the Qur'ānic phrases and sentences are printed in a bold font, to distinguish them from the explanatory material in which they are embedded.

[406] The Arabic lexicographers offer several ingenious interpretations of *al-Ḥawāriyyūn/-īn*, the collective name for the Disciples of Jesus (peace be upon him), which they derive—like the Qur'ānic term for the brides of Paradise (*ḥūr 'īn*: see note — on p. — above)—from the Arabic root *ḥ–w–r*. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ḥ–W–R.*)

Anas ibn Mālik[296] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On the Night of Breaking the Fast [*Lailat al-Fiṭr*], Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant the recompense due to anyone who has kept the fast throughout the month of Ramaḍān, and He will grant that recompense in full measure. Then, in the early morning of the Day of Breaking the Fast, Allāh (Exalted is He) will give His angels their instructions. In obedience to His command, they will promptly fly down to the earth, where they will position themselves at the street corners and at the crossroads, proclaiming in a voice that is audible to all created beings, apart from the jinn and humankind: "O Community of Muhammad, come forth into the presence of your Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), who accepts the smallest offering, bestows the greatest abundance, and forgives the most terrible sin!"
>
> Then, once the believers have emerged and presented themselves at their place of prayer [*muṣallā*], performed their prayers, and offered their supplications, the Lord (Blessed and Exalted is He) will make sure that they are left with no need that He has not satisfied, no request that He has not answered, and no sin that He has not forgiven. They will then return to their homes, knowing that they have been granted forgiveness.

The following saying [*ḥadīth*] of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is one of those reported on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

> When the month of Ramaḍān is over, and the Night of Breaking the Fast [*Lailat al-Fiṭr*] has arrived, that night is called the Night of the Prize [*Lailat al-Jā'iza*]. Then, in the early morning of the Day of Breaking the Fast, Allāh (Exalted is He) will send His angels forth to visit all the towns and cities on the earth below. Once they have made their descent, they will position themselves at the entrances to all the streets and alleys. There, in a voice that is audible to every being created by Allāh (Exalted is He), apart from the jinn and humankind, they will issue a proclamation, saying: "O Community of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), come forth into the presence of a Noble and Generous Lord [*Rabb Karīm*], who will grant you gifts in abundance, and forgive your terrible sin!"
>
> Then, when the believers have emerged and presented themselves at their place of prayer [*muṣallā*], Allāh (Exalted is He) will say to His angels: "O My angels!" They will respond to His call by saying: "We wait intent upon Your service, time and time again, and upon aiding Your cause, time and time again [*labbaika wa sa'daik*]!"[297] Then He will say to them: "What is the recompense of the hired laborer, once he has done his job?"

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued:

> The angels will reply: "Our God [*Ilāh*] and our Master [*Sayyid*] and our Lord [*Maulā*], You will pay him his wages in full!" So the All-Majestic One [*al-Jalīl*]

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[296] See note 35 on p. 24 above.

[297] See note 167 on p. 88 above.

then goes back and cancels the deal, so that the food reverts to the possession of the original owner. In a case like this, if *ḥalāl* could only mean lawful in essence or substance [*ḥalāl ʿain*], it would no longer be permissible for the fastidiously pious believer [*al-mutawarriʿ al-muʾmin*] to eat the meat concerned, because something has happened in the meantime to make eating it unlawful, namely, its temporary acquisition by the corrupt government official. In actual practice, however, the Muslims are unanimously agreed on the permissibility of eating this food, in spite of the fact that it came into the possession of the corrupt government official, who purchased it with his ill-gotten money, the spending of which is regarded as unlawful by all the Muslims.

It must therefore be understood that the terms *ḥalāl* [lawful] and *ḥarām* [unlawful] refer to the normal application of the sacred law [*sharʿ*], not to the intrinsic nature [*nafs al-ʿain*] of the food, because the only food that is intrinsically lawful is the food of the Prophets [*anbiyāʾ*], as we learn from this tradition [*ḥadīth*]:

> The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once heard a man say: "O Allāh, grant me a means of subsistence that is absolutely lawful [*ḥalāl muṭlaq*]!"
>
> The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then told him: "That is the sustenance of the Prophets [*rizq al-anbiyāʾ*]. You must ask Allāh to grant you a means of subsistence for which He will not punish you!"

Let us also consider how the sacred law [*sharʿ*] applies to the situation of the non-Muslim communities within the Islāmic state [*ahl adh-dhimma*],[253] the Jews [*Yahūd*], Christians [*Naṣārā*] and Zoroastrians [*Majūs*], who trade in forbidden commodities [*muḥarramāt*] such as wine and pigs.

In allowing them to sell these commodities, and then collecting the tithe [*ʿushr*] from the proceeds of their sales, we are acting in accordance with the instruction handed down from [the rightly guided Caliph] ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him), for it was he who said:

"Leave them in charge of the business of selling [commodities unlawful to Muslims], and collect the tithe [*ʿushr*] from the proceeds of

[253] The *ahl adh-dhimma* are the Jewish, Christian or Sabean subjects of an Islāmic state, who, in return for the payment of a special tax, are entitled under Islāmic law to security of their persons and their property.

inside a pavilion made from a single hollowed pearl. This fits the description given by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Fair maids, close-guarded in pavilions. (55:72)	*ḥūrun maqṣūrātun* *fi 'l-khiyām.*

Every woman amongst them will be dressed in seventy fine articles of clothing, no item being the same as any other. She will be given seventy kinds of perfume, none with the same fragrance as any other. She will also be given seventy thronelike raised couches, made from a red ruby studded with pearls. Upon each of these couches there will be seventy cushions, and over every cushion there will be a canopy. Every woman will have seventy thousand pageboys to attend to her own needs, as well as seventy thousand maidservants to attend to the needs of her husband. Each of these maidservants will carry a dish made of gold, containing some kind of cooked food, the last morsel of which will be found to have a delicious flavor that went unnoticed in the first bite. Her husband will be given special treats like this, as he reclines upon a couch made from red ruby. Such will be his reward for every day on which he has kept the fast of Ramaḍān, quite apart from what he may have earned by performing charitable deeds!

◆

"As a result of this experience, they had come to have faith in Jesus (peace be upon him), and to believe that he spoke the truth. So they now returned to their own people, the Jews *[Yahūd]*—the Children of Israel *[Banī Isrā'īl]*, in other words—and with them they took the leftover food from the table *[mā'ida]*. Their own people did not give them a moment of peace, however, until they had persuaded them to renounce Islām [submission to the Will of the One Almighty God], to forsake their belief in Allāh, and to deny the coming down of the table *[mā'ida]* from heaven. So, while they were sleeping, Allāh transmogrified them into swine *[khanāzīr]*. (All of them were adult males; there was not a boy nor a woman among them.)"

A wise man once remarked: "This story is about a table *[mā'ida]* on which a limited amount of food was placed. A large throng and a numerous gathering of people came away from it [fully satisfied], and yet it was still in the same condition. So how about the table of grace *[mā'idat ar-riḍā]*, and the dining sheet whereon is spread the mercy *[bisāṭ ar-raḥma]* that has neither limit nor end?"

As we are informed in the words of one traditional report *[khabar]*:

"Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has no fewer than a hundred mercies at His disposal. One of these mercies He has already sent down to the earth, where He has distributed it among His creatures, and this is what enables them to feel sympathy for one another *[yatarāḥamūn]*, and to treat one another with considerate kindness *[yata'āṭafūn]*. The other ninety-nine He has kept back for His own eventual use, His purpose being to use them for the merciful treatment of His servants on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*."

Another traditional report *[khabar]* reads as follows:

"On the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, the All-Majestic One *[al-Jalīl]* (Magnificent is His Majesty) will spread the dining sheet of glory and honor *[bisāṭ al-majd]*. The sins of the ancients and the moderns will gather around the edges, while the sheet itself remains empty, in the hope of catching Iblis[114] when he arrogantly trespasses upon it."

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[114] Iblis is the personal name of the Devil. Some Western scholars consider it to be an arabicized version of the Greek *diabolos*, but the Arab philologists derive it from the root *b–l–s*, on the grounds that Iblis "has nothing to expect *[ablasa]* from the mercy of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)." He is also called *ash-Shaiṭān* [Satan, the Devil], *'adūww Allāh* [the enemy of God] or simply *al-'adūww* [the Enemy]. Unlike the English word Satan, however, *ash-Shaiṭān* is not strictly speaking a proper name, as A.J. Wensinck points out in his article IBLIS in the *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*. (See also: T.P. Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, art. DEVIL).

It would be entirely inappropriate, however, for any intelligent and rational person to take all of this for granted, and to be deluded by it into taking unnecessary risks. He must not let himself be carried away by unduly optimistic expectation, for such folly would doom him to perdition. Instead of embarking on that perilous course, he must expend all his effort, and exhaust all his energy, in the earnest endeavor to fulfill the commandments and observe the prohibitions [decreed by the Lord], and to surrender all concerns to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). He must make a frequent practice of seeking forgiveness *[istighfār]* and turning in repentance *[tauba]*, and he must always be warily on his guard.

No amount of fear and dread should ever cause a believer to despair of the mercy of Allāh, and no degree of optimism should ever induce him to fall into the commission of unlawful acts, and into negligent disregard of the commandments. Instead of going to such extremes, he must find a middle way. As someone wisely put it: "If the believer's fear and hope were of equally balanced weight, his fear and his hope would be like the two wings of a bird—and a bird cannot fly with one wing only!"

4. The Festival *['Īd]* of the Community of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

At this point, the fourth Festival *['Īd]* is mentioned only in order to complete the list, since we have already dealt with the relevant details of the subject, at the beginning of [this section of] the present Discourse.[315]

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[315] See pp. 146–49 above.

On the fact that the believer *[mu’min]* and the unbeliever *[kāfir]* both take part in the Festival *[‘Īd]*, albeit for very different reasons.

The believer *[mu’min]* and the unbeliever *[kāfir]* both take part in the Festival *[‘Īd]*, since each of them has cause to celebrate the occasion. The believer celebrates it for the sake of pleasing the All-Merciful *[ar-Rahmān]*, whereas the unbeliever celebrates it for the sake of pleasing the Devil *[ash-Shaiṭān]*.

When the believer *[mu’min]* sets out to celebrate his Festival *[‘Īd]*, he wears on his head the crown of right guidance *[tāj al-hidāya]*; on his eyes, the emblem of respect for wise advice *[fikrat al-‘ibra]*; on his ears, the mark of attentive listening to the Truth *[istimā‘ al-Ḥaqq]*; on his tongue, the profession of faith in the Divine Oneness *[ash-shahāda bi’t-tawḥīd]*; on his heart, intuitive knowledge and certitude *[al-ma‘rifa wa’l-yaqīn]*; over his neck, the garment of submission to the Will of Allāh *[ridā’ al-Islām]*; around his waist, the belt of servitude *[mintaqat al-‘ubūdiyya]*.

The environment in which the believer celebrates his Festival *[‘Īd]* consists of prayer-niches *[mahārib]*, large congregational mosques *[jawāmi‘]*, and smaller places of worship *[masājid]*. His adored Master *[Ma‘būd]* is the Lord of all servants and creatures, so to Him he addresses his humble entreaty and request, and the Lord grants him acceptance and bountiful favor [in the present life], then allows him to dwell [in the life hereafter] in the Abode of Honor *[Dār al-Karāma]* and the Gardens of Paradise.

As for the unbeliever *[kāfir]*, on the other hand, when he sets out to celebrate his Festival *[‘Īd]*, he wears on his head the crown of abject loss and error *[tāj al-khusrān wa’d-ḍalāl]*, on his ears, the seal of heedlessness and blockage *[khatm al-ghafla wa’l-ḥijāb]*; on his eyes, the tell-tale signs of negligence and indulgence in the carnal passions *[‘alāmat as-sahw wa’sh-shahawāt]*; on his tongue, the stamp of mischief and alienation *[khatm ash-shaqāwa wa 'l-ib'ād]*, in his heart, the dismal darkness of denial and negation *[zulmat an-nakara wa 'l-juhūd]*; around his waist, the girdle of disunity, mischief and discord *[zunnār*[116] *al-furqa wa 'sh-shaqāwa wa 'sh-shiqāq]*.

The setting in which the unbeliever celebrates his Festival *['Īd]* is the synagogue *[bī'a]*, or one of the churches *[kanā'is]*, or the temple devoted to fire-worship *[bait an-nār]*. The objects of his worship are graven images and idols *[al-wuthun wa 'l-asnām]*, and he is bound for his ultimate destination in Hell *[Jahannam]* and the fires thereof.

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[116] The *zunnār*, a kind of girdle or waistband traditionally worn by non-Muslims (especially Christians) was often used by Islamic authors as a symbol of imperfect faith. In the Forty-third Discourse of *The Sublime Revelation [al-Fath ar-Rabbānī]*,* Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) says:

> There is nothing to be said until you cut the waistband *[zunnār]*, renew your Islām, truly repent with your heart, and leave the house of your natural urges *[tab']*, your passions *[hawā]*, your existence *[wujūd]*, and your efforts to attract benefit to you and repel harm from you.

(*See p. 278 of the edition published by Al-Baz.)

On the true significance and character of the Festival *[ʿĪd]*.

The Festival *[ʿĪd]* is not really about dressing up in fine new clothes, eating delicious treats, embracing attractive ladies, and pursuing carnal pleasures and delights.

In its outward celebration, the Festival *[ʿĪd]* is actually meant to symbolize the acceptance of acts of worshipful obedience; the remission of sins and mistakes; the conversion of bad deeds into good deeds; the glad tidings of promotion to higher spiritual degrees; the conferring of robes of honor, exquisite gifts, presents, and gracious favors; the expansion of the feelings through the light of faith *[īmān]*; the calming of the heart through the strength of certainty *[yaqīn]*, and through the signs it has come to recognize; and the pouring forth of the oceans of knowledge and all kinds of wisdom, from the heart onto the tongue, to be expressed with fluency and eloquence.

It was on a Festival day *[yaum ʿĪd]*, as the story is told, that a man once entered the presence of ʿAlī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him, and may Allāh ennoble his countenance) and found him eating coarse brown bread *[khubz khushkār]*. "Today is the day of the Festival *[ʿĪd]*," the man exclaimed, "yet here you are, eating coarse brown bread!" So he said to his puzzled visitor:

"Today is the day of the Festival *[ʿĪd]* for someone whose fast *[ṣaum]* has been accepted, whose effort has been deemed worthy, and whose sin has been forgiven. Today is a Festival *[ʿĪd]* for us, and tomorrow is a Festival *[ʿĪd]* for us. Every day in which we do not disobey Allāh is a Festival *[ʿĪd]* for us."

It is therefore important for every intelligent person to stop focusing on the external aspect *[ẓāhir]*, and not to let it capture his attention. His perspective on the day of the Festival *[ʿĪd]* should be from the standpoint of contemplation and reflection. He should regard the Festival

['Īd] as comparable to the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*. When he hears the sound of the Sultan's bugle *[būq]* announcing the advent of the Night of the Festival *[Lailat al-'Īd]*, he should be reminded of the blast of the trumpet *[ṣūr]* on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*. While most of the people are spending the Night of the Festival *[Lailat al-'Īd]* asleep, resting themselves in preparation for the day of celebration that lies ahead of them, he should remember the interval of slumber between the two blasts [that will be sounded on the Day of Resurrection].

On the morning of the Day of the Festival *[Yaum al-'Īd]*, he will see how the people look, as they come into town from their mansions and their houses. He will notice the differences in their states of being, and the variety of style and color in the clothes they wear, for each person will be dressed in a special outfit and a special set of ornaments. One person will look happy, while another looks depressed. One will be riding, while another walks on foot. One will be rich, while another is poor. One will be in a cheerful mood, while another is in some kind of distress.

As he surveys this scene, the intelligent observer should be reminded of the variety there will be among the people present at the Resurrection *[ahl al-Qiyāma]*. Those who have practiced worshipful obedience *[ahl aṭ-ṭā'a]* will be joyfully happy, while those who are guilty of sinful disobedience *[ahl al-ma'ṣiya]* will be miserably despondent. The truly devout *[muttaqī]* will be riding in comfort, while the offender who is a *mushrik* [one who associates partners with Allāh] will be stumbling, getting tripped and dragged along with his face to the ground, or walking at best.

As Allāh has said (More Glorious is He than any other sayer):

On the day when We shall muster	*yauma naḥshuru 'l-muttaqīna*
the truly devout unto the	*ila 'r-Raḥmāni*
All-Merciful, in fine style...	*wafdā*
(19:85)	

That is to say, "riding on thoroughbred she-camels."

and We shall drive the guilty	*wa nasūqu 'l-mujrimīna*
culprits into Hell, like a herd of beasts.	*ilā jahannama wirdā.*
(19:86)	

That is to say, " like a thirsty herd."

As for the pious abstainer *[zāhid]*, the person endowed with direct intuition *[ʿārif]*, and the spiritual deputy *[badal]*,[517] each and every one will be in a state of comfort and affluent well-being, in the presence of their King *[Malik]* and their Beloved *[Maḥbūb]*, beneath the shadow of the Heavenly Throne *[ʿArsh]*. They will be invested with ornaments and fine attire, and the radiant lights of worshipful acts and spiritual experiences *[anwār aṭ-ṭāʿāt wa ʾl-maʿārif]* will be visible upon their faces, for they will be glowing and resplendent. Tables will be set in front of them, spread with all kinds of cooked food, drinks and fruits, until the Reckoning *[Ḥisāb]* is over, and the accounts of all creatures have been settled. Then they will move on to the Garden of Paradise, to occupy the dwellings that Allāh (Exalted is He) has made ready for them. There they will find pleasures and delights the likes of which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and no human heart has ever conceived.

Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

So no soul knows what comfort	*fa-lā taʿlamu nafsun*
is laid up for them secretly,	*mā ukhfiya la-hum*
as a reward	*min qurrati aʿyun:*
for what they used to do. (32:17)	*jazāʾan bi-mā kānū yaʿmalūn.*

As for the condition of someone who is strongly addicted to this lower world, that person will be in a state of wailing and weeping and terrible distress. He will be prevented from sharing in the blessings enjoyed by the people [of Paradise], because of his worldly attachment, his acquisition of unlawful and dubious assets, and his mixed performance where obedience to his Lord is concerned. He will see his place in the Garden of Paradise, but he will not be able to reach it, until he has acquitted himself of the debts and liabilities he has incurred.

As for the unbeliever *[kāfir]*, he will burst into loud laments, wailing and moaning in reaction to what his eyes behold, as he is given a preview of the kinds of torment that await him, for he will find himself facing the prospect of chastisement, degradation, perdition, and everlasting existence in the Fires of Hell.

When the intelligent Muslim sees the flags unfurled, and the banners hoisted to mark the celebration of the Festival *[ʿĪd]*, he should be reminded of the angelic flagbearers *[aṣḥāb al-aʿlām]* who will appear when the herald of the All-Merciful *[munādi ʾr-Raḥmān]* announces

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[517] See Vol. 2, note 254, p. 175.

[to the inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise] that the moment has come for them to visit the Lord of Mankind *[Rabb al-Anām]* in the Abode of Peace *[Dār as-Salām]*, at the command of the Source of Peace *[bi-amri 's-Salām]*.

When he sees that the rows [of worshippers] have been properly formed, and that his fellow creatures have assembled for the congregational prayer, he should be reminded of how all creatures will stand in the presence of the All-Compelling One *[al-Jabbār]*, and of the rows formed by the profligate and the righteous *[al-fujjār wa 'l-abrār]* on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum an-Nashr]*, when all secrets *[asrār]* will be revealed.

When he sees the people disperse from the site used for congregational worship in the open air *[jabbāna]*—as each individual returns to his allotted house, or mosque *[masjid]*, or hostel *[khān]*—the intelligent observer should be reminded of the moment when all creatures will disperse from the presence of the King *[al-Malik]* the All-Bounteous One *[al-Mannān]*, the Requiter *[ad-Dayyān]*, bound for the Garden of Paradise, or for the Fire of Hell.

As the Lord of Exalted Majesty and Gracious Favor *[Dhu 'l-'Aẓama wa 'l-Imtinān]* has told us:

And on the day when the Hour comes, on that day they will be divided. (30:14)	*wa yauma taqūmu 's-sā'atu* *yauma'idhin yatafarraqūn.*
A host of them will be in the Garden [of Paradise], and a host of them in the Blaze [of Hell]. (42:7)	*farīqun* *fi 'l-jannati* *wa farīqun fi 's-sa'īr.*

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This brings us to the end of the Seventh Discourse.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn].

The Eighth Discourse

Concerning the special qualities of the Ten Days *[Ayyām al-ʿAshr]*.[318]

Let us first of all consider the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

By the dawn,	*wa 'l-fajri*
and ten nights,	*wa layālin ʿashr:*
and the even and the Odd,	*wa 'sh-shafʿi wa 'l-Watr:*
and the night when it travels!	*wa 'l-laili idhā yasr:*
Is there, in that, an oath	*hal fī dhālika qasamun*
for thinking man! (89:1–5)[319]	*li-dhī ḥijr.*

As for His saying:

By the dawn...	*wa 'l-fajri ...*

—that is something about which people have held various opinions.

According to Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

- What is meant here by "the dawn *[al-fajr]*" is the ritual prayer of daybreak *[ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ]*.
- The expression "and ten nights *[wa layālin ʿashr]*" refers to the ten [special nights at the beginning] of [the month of] Dhu 'l-Ḥijja, while "the even *[ash-shafʿ]*" is the creation *[khalq]* and "the Odd *[al-Watr]*" is Allāh.

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[318] A more strictly literal translation of *Ayyām al-ʿAshr* would be "The Days of the Ten [Nights]," meaning the days corresponding to those nights. As Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) explains in this Discourse, there is some disagreement among the traditional authorities as to which days of which month are properly referred to as *Ayyām al-ʿAshr*. The prevailing opinion, however, is that the expression applies to the [first] ten days of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja, the month of the Pilgrimage.

[319] In this Discourse, and particularly in this first subsection, the translation of Qurʾānic verses *[āyāt]* has been adapted to suit the context in which they are quoted, in relation to various commentaries and interpretations. Without such adaptation, many passages would hardly be intelligible. The task can be extremely difficult, however, since the discussion often hinges on fine points of Arabic word formation, or on subtleties of Arabic grammar and syntax.

- In the phrase "and the night when it travels *[wa 'l-laili idhā yasr],*" the less common Arabic word *yasr* is synonymous with the common verb *dhahaba* [goes away; departs].
- As for "Is there, in that, an oath for thinking man? *[hal fī dhālika qasamun li-dhī ḥijr],*" the unfamiliar Arabic expression *dhī ḥijr* is synonymous with the more usual *dhī lubbin wa 'aql* [someone who has what it takes to think and understand].
- The apodosis or culmination of the oath *[jawāb al-qasam]* is held in suspense, until we reach the sentence:

> Surely your Lord is ever on the watch. *inna Rabba-ka la-bi'l-mirṣād.*
> (89:14)

According to Muqātil (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the interpretation should rather be as follows:

- "By the dawn *[wa 'l-fajr]*" means "[by] the daybreak *[ghadāh]* of the assembly of the Day of Immolation *[jam' Yaum an-Naḥr].*"[320]
- "and ten nights *[wa layālin 'ashr]*": These are the ten nights before the [Day of] Sacrifice *[al-Aḍḥā].* When Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) called them "ten nights," He did so for the simple reason that there are nine days and ten nights [between the beginning of the month of Dhu'l-Ḥijja and the Day of Sacrifice].
- "and the even and the Odd *[wa 'sh-shaf'i wa 'l-Watr]*": As for "the even *[ash-shaf'],*" it refers to Adam and Eve *[Ḥauwā']* (peace be upon them both) [they being an even-numbered couple or pair], while "the Odd *[al-Watr]*" is Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) [He being Single and Unique].
- "and the night when it travels *[wa 'l-laili idhā yasr]*": That is to say, "when it approaches." The night concerned is the Night of the Sacrifice *[Lailat al-Aḍḥā].*

Up to this point, therefore, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has sworn by the Day of Immolation *[Yaum an-Naḥr],* by the Ten *[al-'Ashr],* and by Adam and Eve. He has also sworn by His Own Self *[bi-Nafsi-h]* (Blessed and Exalted is He), and by the Night of the Sacrifice *[Lailat al-Aḍḥā].* As soon as He has finished swearing these oaths, He goes on to say:

- "Is there, in that, an oath for thinking man *[hal fī dhālika qasamun li-dhī ḥijr]?*": In other words: "Is the content of that oath sufficiently meaningful to one who possesses a faculty of understanding *[dhī lubb]*, or one who possesses a rational mind *[dhī 'aql]*." If so, he can comprehend the momentous import of this next asseveration: "Surely your Lord is ever on the watch *[inna Rabba-ka la-bi'l-mirṣād]*."

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[320] For a full account of the Day of Immolation *[Yaum an-Naḥr],* see pp. 228–77 below.

According to some, what is meant by "the dawn *[al-fajr]*" is "the dawning of the day *[fajr an-nahār]*," while others maintain that it simply means "the day[time]," which may be represented allegorically by the dawn, since the latter is the first part thereof.

- Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) said: "It refers specifically to the dawn of the Day of Immolation *[Yaum an-Naḥr]*."
- 'Ikrima (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) said: "Allāh (Exalted is He) has sworn by the sudden gushing *[infijār]* of water from the fingers of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)."

Other interpretations include the following:

- Allāh (Exalted is He) has sworn by the sudden bolting *[infijār]* of the she-camel, out of the desert to join Ṣāliḥ (peace be upon him).[321]
- Allāh (Exalted is He) has sworn by the sudden gushing *[infijār]* of water from the rock, brought about by the staff of Moses *['aṣā Mūsā]* (peace be upon him)
- Allāh (Exalted is He) has sworn by the sudden gushing *[infijār]* of water from the eyes of the disobedient sinners.
- Allāh (Exalted is He) has sworn by the sudden eruption *[infijār]* of intuitive knowledge *[ma'rifa]* from the heart, as when Allāh (Exalted is He) said:

Is he who was dead and We have brought him back to life.... (6:123)	*a-wa man kāna maitan fa-aḥyainā-hu* . . .

—meaning: "through faith *[īmān]* and intuitive knowledge *[ma'rifa]*."

There are likewise several other interpretations of His expression (Almighty and Glorious is He): "and ten nights *[wa layālin 'ashr]*." For instance:

- As reported by Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> [The ten nights mentioned in:] "By the dawn, and ten nights *[wa 'l-fajri wa layālin 'ashr]*" are the Ten of the Sacrifice *['Ashr al-Aḍḥā]*.

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[321] See Qur'ān 7:77,78.

- Ibn az-Zubair and Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with them) both said: "They are the Ten of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja."
- According to another traditional report, however, Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "The 'ten' are the last ten [nights] of the month of Ramaḍān."
- It was Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "They are the [set of] ten peculiar to Moses [*Mūsā*] (peace be upon him)."[322]
- Muhammad ibn Jarīr at-Ṭabarī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) said: "They are the ten [nights] of the first part of [the month of] Muḥarram."

We also find numerous interpretations of the words of Allāh (Exalted is He): "and the even and the odd [*wa 'sh-shaf'i wa 'l-watr*]," for instance:

- Qatāda and as-Suddī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them) Allāh (Exalted is He) said: "'The even [*ash-shaf'*]' means 'every [set of] two,' while 'the Odd [*al-Watr*]' is Allāh (Exalted is He)."
- Some say that both terms apply to Adam and Eve. Muqātil is one of those who maintain this view, on the grounds that Adam was "odd" [as a single, unmarried man], but then he became "even," when paired with his wife Eve.
- Others say that both terms apply to the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], the cycles of which are sometimes even-numbered, and sometimes odd-numbered.
- According to ar-Rabī' ibn Anas and Abu'l-'Āliya (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them), both terms apply specifically to the [three-cycle] ritual prayer of sunset [*salāt al-maghrib*], of which the first two cycles form an "even" pair, while the third is single or "odd."
- Some maintain that "the even" is the Day of Immolation [*Yaum an-Nahr*], because it is the tenth [of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja], while "the odd" is the Day of 'Arafa, because it is the ninth [of that month]. Yet others maintain that "the even" refers to the two days after the Immolation [*Nahr*], and "the odd" to the third [day thereafter].

As for the words of Allāh (Exalted is He): "and the night when it travels *[wa 'l-laili idhā yasr]*," the meaning may be: "when it departs *[idhā dhahaba]*."[323] Other interpretations include the following:

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[322] See pp. 181–82 below.

- It means: "when it grows dark *[idhā aẓlama]*."
- It refers specifically to the night of al-Muzdalifa.[324]
- It means: "when its inhabitants travel *[sarā]* in it," because the basic idea conveyed by the Arabic root s–r–y, from which *yasr* is derived, is "travel-by-night." [325]

Interpretations of the words of Allāh (Exalted is He): "Is there, in that, an oath for thinking man? *[hal fī dhālika qasamun li-dhī ḥijr]*" include the following:

- The meaning is: "for one who possesses a rational mind *[li-dhī 'aql]*." This is the stated opinion of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).
- According to al-Ḥasan [al-Basrī] and Abū Rajā' (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them), the meaning is: "for one who has knowledge *[li-dhī 'ilm]*."
- According to Muhammad ibn Ka'b (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the meaning is: "for one who has religion *[li-dhī dīn]*."

[Though cast in the form of a question] the sentence should be understood as an affirmative statement, meaning: "In that, there surely is an oath for thinking man *[inna fī dhālika qasamun li-dhī ḥijr]*." In other words, [the interrogative particle] *hal* is used here [in the Qur'ānic text] instead of [the affirmative particle] *inna*.

Returning to the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> By the dawn, and ten nights… *wa 'l-fajri wa layālin 'ashr…*

—they should be understood to mean: "By the Truth of the Lord of the dawn *[wa Ḥaqqi Rabbi 'l-fajri]*, by the Truth of the Lord of ten nights

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[323] As the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has mentioned near the beginning of this subsection (p. 167 above), this is the interpretation favored by Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

[324] After the rite of Standing at 'Arafāt, the Pilgrim moves on to al-Muzdalifa, where he performs the sunset *[maghrib]* and late evening *['ishā']* prayers, preferably in congregation *[jamā'a]*. Then he makes camp and spends the night there. From al-Muzdalifa, or from wherever in the vicinity he can easily gather them, the Pilgrim collects the pebbles to be thrown at the satanic pillars. (See Vol. 1, pp. 37–38.)

[325] From the word "because…," this is an explanatory paraphrase, rather than a translation. Since the original assumes a complete knowledge of Arabic lexicology and linguistic structure, it is effectively untranslatable, at least without an extensive commentary of its own!

[wa Ḥaqqi Rabbī layālin 'ashr]," and so on, to the final element of the oath. The same applies to similar instances [elsewhere in the Qur'ān], such as the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

By the sun and its brightness,	*wa 'sh-shamsi wa ḍuḥā-hā*
and the moon when she follows him,	*wa 'l-qamari idhā talā-hā*
and the day when it reveals him,	*wa 'n-nahāri idhā jallā-hā*
and the night when it enshrouds him,	*wa 'l-laili idhā yaghshā-hā*
and the heaven and Him who built it,	*wa 's-samā'i wa mā banā-hā*
and the earth and Him who spread it,	*wa 'l-arḍi wa mā ṭaḥā-hā*
and a soul and Him who perfected it.	*wa nafsin wa mā sawwā-hā.*
(91:1–7)	
By the heaven and the morning star.	*wa 's-samā'i wa 't-ṭāriq.*
(86:1)	
By the heaven,	*wa 's-samā'i*
holding mansions of the stars.	*dhāti 'l-burūj.*
(85:1)	

—to mention only a few examples.

◆

Concerning what has come down to us about the charismatic exploits of the Prophets *[karāmāt al-Anbiyāʾ]* during the Ten Days of Dhu ʾl-Ḥijja, and the special merits of the good deeds then performed.

Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt ['Father of Blessings'] Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has informed us, after listing the authorities by whom the report was transmitted,[326] that Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said:

"It was during the Ten Days of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja that Allāh accepted the repentance of Adam, when He relented toward him and restored him to His grace at ʿArafa, because he acknowledged *[iʿtarafa]* his sin.

"It was during those Ten Days that Abraham the Bosom Friend *[Ibrāhīm al-Khalīl]* (peace be upon him) obtained the bosom friendship *[khulla]* [bestowed upon him by Allāh], having sacrificed his wealth for the sake of the guests *[dīfān]*, himself for the sake of the fires *[nīrān]*, his son for the sake of the Criterion *[Furqān]*, and his heart for the sake of the All-Merciful *[Rahmān]*. No one has ever had an impeccable claim to absolute trust *[tawakkul]*, with the exception of Abraham, the Bosom Friend of the All-Merciful *[Ibrāhīm Khalīl ar-Rahmān]*.

"It was during those Ten Days that Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) constructed the noble Kaʿba. Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

And when Abraham and Ishmael were raising	*wa idh yarfaʿu* *Ibrāhīmu 'l-qawāʿida*

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[326] **Author's note:** Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **Shaikh al-Hāfiz Abū Bakr Ahmad ibn ʿAlī ath-Thābit al-Khatīb** [the Preacher]—**Ahmad ibn Ahmad ibn Zarqūna—Muhammad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ash-Shāfiʿī** (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him)—**Muhammad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn ʿAbd ar-Rahmān** in Aleppo [Halab]—**ʿAmr ibn ʿUthmān—al-Walīd—Ibn al-Mubārak—Khālid al-Hadhdhāʾ** [the Cobbler]—**ʿIkrima—Ibn ʿAbbās** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

They said: "We wish to eat from it,	*qālū nurīdu an na'kula min-hā*
so that our hearts may be at rest,	*wa taṭma'inna qulūbu-nā*
and that we may know that you	*wa na'lama an qad*
have told us the truth, and that	*ṣadaqta-nā*
we may be among those who	*wa nakūna 'alai-hā*
are witnesses to it." (5:113)	*mina 'sh-shāhidīn.*
Jesus, son of Mary, said: "O Allāh,	*qāla 'Īsa 'bnu Maryama 'llāhumma*
our Lord, send down for us a table	*Rabba-nā anzil 'alai-nā*
spread with food from heaven,	*mā'idatan mina 's-samā'i*
so that it may be a festival for us—	*takūnu la-nā 'īdan*
for the first of us and for the last of us—	*li-awwali-nā wa ākhiri-nā*
and a sign from You.	*wa āyatan min-ka*
And provide us with sustenance,	*wa 'rzuq-nā*
for You are the Best of providers."	*wa Anta Khairu 'r-rāziqīn.*
(5:114)	
Allāh said: "I shall indeed send	*qāla 'llāhu innī munazzilu-hā*
it down for you.	*'alai-kum:*
But if anyone amongst you	*fa-man yakfur ba'du*
disbelieves thereafter,	*min-kum fa-innī*
I will surely punish him	*u'adhdhibu-hu*
with a penalty such	*'adhāban lā*
as I have never inflicted	*u'adhdhibu-hu*
on any of the peoples of the world."	*aḥadan mina 'l-'ālamīn.*
(5:115)	
But when Jesus became conscious	*fa-lammā aḥassa 'Īsā*
of their disbelief, he cried:	*min-humu 'l-kufra qāla*
"Who will be my helpers	*man anṣārī*
in the cause of Allāh?"	*ila 'llāh:*
So the Disciples said:	*qāla 'l-Ḥawāriyyūna*
"We shall be Allāh's helpers.	*naḥnu anṣāru 'llāh:*
We believe in Allāh,	*āmannā bi-'llāhi*
and you must bear witness	*wa 'shhad*
that we have surrendered	*bi-annā muslimūn*
[unto Him]." (3:52)	

We shall now provide an explanatory version of the story, drawing upon traditional commentaries and reports:[405]

The Disciples *[Ḥawāriyyūn]*[406] said: "O Jesus *[yā 'Īsā]*, is your Lord able to grant your request, if you ask Him **to send down for us a**

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[405] In the passages that follow, the Qur'ānic phrases and sentences are printed in a bold font, to distinguish them from the explanatory material in which they are embedded.

[406] The Arabic lexicographers offer several ingenious interpretations of *al-Ḥawāriyyūn/-īn*, the collective name for the Disciples of Jesus (peace be upon him), which they derive—like the Qur'ānic term for the brides of Paradise (*hūr 'īn*: see note — on p. — above)—from the Arabic root *ḥ–w–r*. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ḥ–W–R*.)

that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The chieftain *[sayyid]* of the months is the month of Ramaḍān, and the mightiest of them in sanctity *[ḥurma]* is Dhu 'l-Ḥijja.

Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt has further informed us, likewise on good traditional authority,[328] that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Of all the days of this world, the most excellent are the Ten Days of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja.

When someone asked: "Is there nothing to match them, [not even] in fighting for the cause of Allāh *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*?" he replied:

> There is nothing to match them, [not even] in fighting for the cause of Allāh *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*, unless it be a man who rubs his face in the dust.

According to another traditional report, also conveyed to us by Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt,[329] 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) was once heard to say:

"During the lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), there was a man who was extremely fond of vocal music *[samā']*—of singing *[ghinā']*, in other words. As soon as the new moon of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja appeared, however, he would start the day in a state of fasting *[ṣā'iman]*. The story came to the notice of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so they brought the man into his presence, and he asked him: 'What has prompted you to devote these days to fasting?' 'O Messenger of Allāh,' the man replied, 'they are days of religious ceremonies *[ayyām mashā'ir]* and the days of the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, so I dearly wished that Allāh (Exalted is He) might allow me to participate in the pilgrims' prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*.' On hearing this, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told the man:

> "'For each and every day you devote to fasting, you will be credited with the emancipation of a hundred slaves *['itq mi'at raqaba]*, with a hundred she-camels for you to guide in caravan, and with a hundred mares for you to ride in [fighting for] the cause of Allāh *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*

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[328] **Author's note:** Shaikh Imām Abu 'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: al-Faḍl ibn Muḥammad al-Qaṣṣār [the Bleacher] al-Iṣfahānī—Abū Sa'īd al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ibn Sahdān—'Abdu'llāh ibn Muḥammad al-Warrāq [the Papermaker]—Abū Bakr al-Bazzār [the Seedsman]—Abū Kāmil al-Faḍl ibn al-Ḥusain al-Jaḥdarī—Abū 'Āṣim ibn Hilāl—Ayyūb—ibn az-Zubair—Jābir (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[329] **Author's note:** Shaikh Imām Abu 'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: al-Qāḍī [the Judge] Abu 'l-Muẓaffar Hanād ibn Ibrāhīm al-Bukhārī an-Nasafī—'Aṭā' ibn Abī Rubbāḥ—'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

> "'Then, when it comes to the Day of *Tarwiya*, you will be credited with the emancipation of a thousand slaves, with a thousand she-camels for you to guide in caravan, and with a thousand mares for you to ride in [fighting for] the cause of Allāh *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*.
>
> "'Then, when it comes to the Day of 'Arafa, you will be credited with the emancipation of two thousand slaves, with two thousand she-camels for you to guide in caravan, and with two thousand mares for you to ride in [fighting for] the cause of Allāh *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*. You will also be credited with keeping the fast in the year before this one, and in the year to come after it.'"

Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported[330] as having said:

"Of all the days on which righteous work is performed, nothing is dearer to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) than a man [who does righteous work] during these days. (That is to say, during the Ten Days.) [When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said as much] they asked him: 'O Messenger of Allāh, not even the sacred struggle *[jihād]* for the cause of Allāh?' To this he replied:

> "'Not even the sacred struggle *[jihād]* for the cause of Allāh. The only exception is a man who leaves home with his self-centered personality *[nafs]* and his material wealth, and then brings nothing of that back on his return.'"

Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt has also informed us, on good traditional authority,[331] that [the Prophet's wife] Ḥafṣa (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said:

"There were four practices that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never failed to observe, namely: (1) fasting during the Ten [Days] of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja; (2) [fasting on the Day of] 'Āshūrā';[332] (3) [fasting on at least] three days in every month; (4) two cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer *[rak'atān]* before the [prescribed prayer of] early morning *[ghadāh]*."

According to another traditional report, also conveyed to us by

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[330] This report has also been conveyed to us by Shaikh Imām Abu 'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who cites a chain of transmission *[isnād]* going back to: **Sa'īd ibn Jubair—Ibn 'Abbās** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

[331] **Author's note.** Shaikh Imām Abu 'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **Abū Bakr ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Alī ibn Thābit al-Ḥāfiẓ—Jubaira bint Khālid al-Khuzā'ī—Ḥafṣa** (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

[332] For a detailed account of the special qualities of the Day of 'Āshūrā', see pp. 278–94 below.

> "'Then, when it comes to the Day of *Tarwiya*, you will be credited with the emancipation of a thousand slaves, with a thousand she-camels for you to guide in caravan, and with a thousand mares for you to ride in [fighting for] the cause of Allāh *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*.
>
> "'Then, when it comes to the Day of ʿArafa, you will be credited with the emancipation of two thousand slaves, with two thousand she-camels for you to guide in caravan, and with two thousand mares for you to ride in [fighting for] the cause of Allāh *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*. You will also be credited with keeping the fast in the year before this one, and in the year to come after it.'"

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> "'Not even the sacred struggle *[jihād]* for the cause of Allāh. The only exception is a man who leaves home with his self-centered personality *[nafs]* and his material wealth, and then brings nothing of that back on his return.'"

Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt has also informed us, on good traditional authority,[331] that [the Prophet's wife] Ḥafṣa (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said:

"There were four practices that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never failed to observe, namely: (1) fasting during the Ten [Days] of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja; (2) [fasting on the Day of] ʿĀshūrāʾ;[332] (3) [fasting on at least] three days in every month; (4) two cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer *[rakʿatān]* before the [prescribed prayer of] early morning *[ghadāh]*."

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[331] **Author's note.** Shaikh Imām Abu 'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **Abū Bakr ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Thābit al-Ḥāfiẓ—Jubaira bint Khālid al-Khuzāʿī—Ḥafṣa (may Allāh be well pleased with her).**

[332] For a detailed account of the special qualities of the Day of ʿĀshūrāʾ, see pp. 278–94 below.

Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt,[333] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Of all the days, there are none in which Allāh (Exalted is He) more dearly loves to have worshipful service performed for His sake, other than the Ten Days of Dhu'l-Hijja. To devote just one of them to fasting is equivalent to fasting for one whole year, and keeping vigil *[qiyām]* on one of those nights is like keeping vigil for one whole year.

Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt has further informed us, likewise on good traditional authority,[334] that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone devotes the Ten Days to fasting, Allāh will record a whole year of fasting in his credit column, for each and every one of those days.

Of Sa'īd ibn Jubair (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), it is reported that he used to tell people: "Do not extinguish your lamps during the Ten Nights!" He would give instructions for the servants to be kept awake, and he took great delight in devoting that time to worship *['ibāda]*.

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[333] **Author's note:** Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **Hamza ibn 'Īsā ibn al-Hasan al-Warrāq** [the Papermaker]—**Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib—Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[334] **Author's note:** Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **al-Hasan ibn Ahmad al-Muqri** [the Qur'ān-teacher]—**Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir—Jābir** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Concerning the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* that is traditionally recommended during the Ten Days *[Ayyām al-ʿAshr]*.

The following report has been conveyed to us by Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt ['Father of Blessings'] Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who cites good traditional authority in support of its authenticity:[335]

According to ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone enlivens any night of the Ten Nights of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja [by keeping vigil], it will be as if he had performed the same worshipful service *[ʿibāda]*, for the sake of Allāh, as someone who not only performs the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, but also performs the Visitation *[ʿUmra]* throughout the entire year. If someone devotes one day to fasting, during that period, it will be as if he had devoted the whole of the year to the worshipful service of Allāh (Exalted is He).

Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt has also informed us, again citing strong traditional authority,[336] that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When the Ten [Days and Nights] of Dhu 'l-Hijja come around, you must devote yourselves strenuously to worshipful obedience *[ṭāʿa]*, for they are days upon which Allāh (Exalted is He) has bestowed His special favor, and He has made the sanctity of their nighttime equivalent to the sanctity of their daytime. So, if a worshipper prays *[ṣallā]* during any night of the Ten Nights, performing four cycles of ritual prayer *[rakaʿāt]* in the last third [of the night], and including the following recitations:

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[335] **Author's note**: Shaikh Imām Abu 'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **ash-Sharīf Abū ʿAbdi'llāh Muhammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Muhammad ibn Yahyā 'l-Mahdī—Hishām ibn ʿUrwa—his father [ʿUrwa]—ʿĀʾisha** (may Allāh be well pleased with her)**—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).**

[336] **Author's note**: Shaikh Imām Abu 'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz—Jaʿfar ibn Muhammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusain—his father Muhammad ibn ʿAlī—his father ʿAlī ibn al-Husain Zain al-ʿĀbidīn—his father, al-Husain ibn ʿAlī—his father ʿAlī** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)**—the Prophet** (Allāh **bless him and give him peace).**

—the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]*—one time only;
—the Two Pleas for Refuge *[al-Mu'awwidhatān]*,[337]
—the Sūra of Sincere Devotion *[Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ]*[338]—repeating it three times—and:
—the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[339]—repeating that three times in each cycle *[rak'a]*;
—and if he raises his hands, as soon as he has completed his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and says:

Glory be to the Owner	*subḥāna Dhi 'l-'Izzati*
of the Might and the Dominion!	*wa 'l-Jabarūt*
Glory be to the Owner	*subḥāna Dhi 'l-Qudrati*
of the Power and the Kingdom!	*wa 'l-Malakūt.*
Glory be to the Ever-Living,	*subḥāna 'l-Ḥayyi 'lladhī*
who never dies!	*lā yamūt:*
There is no god but He, the One who	*lā ilāha illā Huwa*
brings to life and causes death,	*yuḥyī wa yumītu*
while He is Ever-Living and never dies.	*wa Huwa Ḥayyun lā yamūt.*
Glory be to Allāh,	*subḥāna 'llāhi*
the Lord of men and all the lands.	*Rabbi 'l-'ibādi wa 'l-bilād.*
Praise be to Allāh—abundant, fine,	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi kathīran wa ṭayyiban*
and blessed praise,	*wa mubārakan*
under every circumstance!	*'alā kulli ḥāl.*
Allāh is Supremely Great,	*Allāhu Akbaru*
immensely so!	*kabīrā*
Our Lord, Splendid is His Majesty,	*Rabbu-nā jalla Jalālu-hu*
and His Power is in every place![340]	*wa Qudratu-hu bi-kulli makān.*

—and if he then pleads for whatever he wishes, he will be entitled to the same reward as someone who performs the Pilgrimage to the Sacred House of Allāh, visits the tomb of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and strives in the cause of Allāh *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*. Whatever he asks of Allāh, He will surely grant him his request.

If he performs that same ritual prayer *[ṣallā-hā]* during every night of the Ten Nights, Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant him lawful access to the Highest Paradise *[al-Firdaws al-A'lā]*, and He will erase every bad deed from his record. "Now set about your work from a new beginning," he will be told.

If it happens to be the Day of 'Arafa, and he devotes the daytime thereof to fasting *[ṣāma nahāra-hu]* and the night thereof to ritual prayer *[ṣallā laila-hu]*, and he pronounces this invocation, and he offers many a humble entreaty in the presence of Allāh (Exalted is He), Allāh will say: "O My angels, bear witness that I have granted him forgiveness, and that I have equated him with the Pilgrim to the House of Allāh *[al-Ḥājj ilā Baiti'llāh]*." The angels will be delighted to learn what Allāh (Exalted is He) has bestowed upon that believing servant *[al-'abd al-mu'min]*, as a reward for his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* and his invocation *[du'ā']*.

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[337] Sūras 113 and 114.

[338] Sūra 112.

[339] Q. 2:255.

[340] **Author's note:** [At this point in his report] the Shaikh [Abu 'l-Barakāt] remarked: "This means: 'His Knowledge [*'Ilm*] is in every place.'"

Concerning the sets of ten *[al-'ashr]* peculiar to each of five Prophets *[Anbiyā']* (peace be upon them all).

1.

The set of ten peculiar to Adam *['ashr Ādam]* (peace be upon him).

It was while Adam was sleeping that Allāh created Eve *[Ḥawwā']* from the short rib in his left side, so he woke up from his slumber and saw Eve sitting there beside him. "To whom do you belong?" he said to her. "To you," she replied. Then he wanted to touch her, but he was told: "You must not touch her until she has been given your dower *[mahr]*." "My God *[Ilāhī]*," said he, "what is my dower [for her]?" Allāh (Exalted is He) explained: "It is that you invoke My blessing upon the Prophet of the end of the age *[Nabī ākhir az-zamān]*, ten times over. That is her dower [from you]."

2. The set of ten peculiar to Abraham, the Bosom Friend of the All-Merciful *['ashr Ibrāhīm Khalīl ar-Raḥmān]* (peace be upon him).

Allāh (Exalted is He) referred implicitly to the set of ten peculiar to Abraham (peace be upon him), when He said:

And [remember]	*wa*
when his Lord put Abraham	*idhi 'btalā Ibrāhīma*
to the test with certain words,	*Rabbu-hu bi-kalimātin*
and he fulfilled them. (2:124)	*fa-atamma-hunn.*

Those words referred implicitly to ten good habits *['ashr khiṣāl]*,[341] five of them connected with the head, namely:

- The parting [of the hair] *[farq]*.[342]

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[341] Compare Vol. 1, p. 298.

[342] It is reported that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) parted his own hair and instructed his Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them) to part theirs. (See Vol. 1, p. 311).

- The trimming of the mustache *[qaṣṣ ash-shārib]*.
- The [use of] the toothbrush *[siwāk]*.[343]
- The thorough rinsing of the mouth *[maḍmaḍa]*.
- The snuffing of water to clear the nostrils *[istinshāq]*.

—and five connected with the rest of the body, namely:

- The clipping of the nails *[taqlīm al-aẓfār]*.
- The plucking of [the hairs from] the armpits *[natf al-ibṭain]*.
- Circumcision *[khitān]*.
- The shaving of the pubic region *[ḥalq al-'āna]*.
- The use of flowing water as a means of cleaning the spaces between the fingers and the toes *[takhlīl al-aṣābi']*.

When Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) fully accomplished these ten practices, Allāh (Exalted is He) honored him with bosom friendship *[khulla]*. In His own words (Exalted is He):

And Allāh chose Abraham	*wa 'ttakhadha 'llāhu*
for a bosom friend. (4:125)	*Ibrāhīma khalīlā.*

3. The set of ten peculiar to the Prophet Shu'aib *['ashr Shu'aib an-Nabī]* (peace be upon him).

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) referred explicitly to the set of ten peculiar to the Prophet Shu'aib (peace be upon him), when He said:

[Shu'aib] said [to Moses]:	*qāla*
"I wish to marry you	*innī urīdu an unkiḥa-ka*
to one of these two daughters	*iḥdā 'bnataiya hātaini*
of mine, on condition	*'alā an*
that you hire yourself to me for	*ta'jura-nī*
[the term of] eight pilgrimages.	*thamāniya ḥijaj:*
If you complete ten,	*fa-in atmamta 'ashran*
that will be of your own accord,	*fa-min 'indi-k:*
for I do not wish to press hard	*wa mā urīdu an ashuqqa*
on you. If Allāh wills, you	*'alai-k: sa-tajidu-nī*
will surely find me	*in shā'a 'llāhu*
one of the righteous." (28:27)	*mina 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn.*

Moses (peace be upon him) did in fact hire himself for ten years, and his wages formed the dower *[mahr]* of the daughter of the Prophet Shu'aib (peace be upon him).

It has also been said that Shu'aib (peace be upon him) wept for ten years, so that he lost his faculty of vision, but Allāh restored his eyesight

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[343] The *siwāk* is a small stick, softened at the tip to form a kind of toothbrush.

Concerning the ritual prayer called *ṣalāt at-tarāwīḥ*: how it was practiced in the time of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and how it came to be more strictly observed during the Caliphate of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

The ritual prayer called *ṣalāt at-tarāwīḥ*[258] was originally instituted as an occasional and voluntary practice, to be observed in accordance with the exemplary custom *[sunna]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). After he had performed it in congregation on one night [in the month of Ramaḍān]—(some say two nights, while others say three)—the believers expected him to join them again, but he did not emerge from his apartment when the next night came around. In order to explain his behavior, he told them later: "If I had come out to join you, it would surely have been imposed upon you as an obligatory religious duty *[la-furiḍat ʿalai-kum]*."

It was eventually established as a regular congregational practice [throughout the month of Ramaḍān], but not until the days of the Caliphate of ʿUmar [ibn al-Khaṭṭāb] (may Allāh be well pleased with him). This accounts for the fact that it is often attributed to the Caliph ʿUmar, on the grounds that he was the first to organize its performance along these lines.

The following tradition *[ḥadīth]* is particularly relevant to this topic, since it has been transmitted from ʿĀʾisha, the Mother of the Believers

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[258] The Arabic word *tarwīḥa* (of which *tarāwīḥ* is the plural form) means "a pause for rest." The *ṣalāt at-tarāwīḥ* is a special form of the Islāmic ritual prayer, performed at some period of the night in the month of Ramaḍān, after the obligatory late-night prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ]*. It consists of twenty cycles *[rakaʿāt]* (or thirty-six, according to the Mālikī school of Islāmic law), and takes its name from the pauses for rest that occur after every fourth cycle. (The salutation *[taslīma]* is pronounced at the end of each set of two cycles.)

When Moses (peace be upon him) was about to engage in the intimate conversation, he placed a piece of olive in his mouth, because he had noticed some alteration in the odor of his mouth, but Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) then said: "O Moses, are you not aware that the change, [in the odor] of the mouth of one who is fasting, is more fragrant to me than the perfume of musk?" It was then that He commanded him to fast for ten days in [the following month of] Muharram, the last of the ten being the Day of ʿĀshūrā'.[344] Then He drew him close, and honored him with intimate conversation *[munājāt]* and nearness. The rest of the story is best told by quoting His own words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And when Moses came	*wa lammā jā'a Mūsā*
to Our appointed rendezvous	*li-mīqāti-nā*
and his Lord had spoken to him,	*wa kallama-hu Rabbu-hu*
he said: "My Lord, show me,	*qāla Rabbi ari-nī*
so that I may look at You!" Said He:	*anẓur ilai-k: qāla*
"You will not see Me, but look	*lan tarā-nī wa lākini 'nẓur*
at the mountain—if it stays still	*ila 'l-jabali fa-'ini 'staqarra*
in its place, then you will see Me."	*makāna-hu fa-saufa tarānī:*
Then, when his Lord revealed	*fa-lammā tajallā Rabbu-hu*
Himself to the mountain,	*li'l-jabali*
He caused it to crumble to dust,	*jaʿala-hu dakkan*
and Moses fell down swooning.	*wa kharra Mūsā ṣaʿiqā:*
So when he recovered his senses,	*fa-lammā afāqa qāla*
he said: "Glory be to You!	*subḥāna-ka*
I turn unto you repentant,	*tubtu ilai-ka*
and I am the first	*wa ana awwalu 'l-*
of the [true] believers." (7:143)	*mu'minīn.*

5. The set of ten peculiar to [Muhammad] our own Chosen Prophet *[ʿashr Nabiyyi-na 'l-Muṣṭafā]* (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

These are the ten that are mentioned in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

By the dawn, and ten nights. (89:1,2)	*wa 'l-fajri wa layālin ʿashr.*

—meaning the Ten [Nights] of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja, which we have already discussed.

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[344] **Author's note:** This is contrary to the view of those who maintain that the month [of his thirty-day fast] was Dhu'l-Qaʿda, and that it would therefore have been in the Ten Days of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja [that Moses (peace be upon him) kept his ten-day fast].

Concerning the ten gifts of grace bestowed by Allāh (Exalted is He) upon those who honor these Ten Days *[al-Ayyām al-‘Ashara]*.

It has been said that Allāh (Exalted is He) will bestow ten charismatic gifts *[karāmāt]* upon anyone who treats these Ten Days *[al-Ayyām al-‘Ashara]* with all due honor and respect, namely:

- Blessed grace *[baraka]* in his earthly life.
- Increase in his property and wealth.
- Safekeeping for his dependents.
- The remission *[takfīr]* of his misdeeds.
- The multiplication of his good deeds.
- The easing of his agonies *[sakarāt]* [in the throes of death].
- The illumination of his darkness and gloom [in the grave].
- The favorable weighting of his balance [at the Resurrection].
- Salvation from the descending layers *[darakāt]* [of Hell].
- Promotion to the ascending levels *[darajāt]* [of Paradise].

If someone makes a charitable donation *[sadaqa]* to a needy person *[miskīn]*, during these Ten Days, it will be as if he had presented charitable donations to all His Prophets *[Anbiyā’]* and His Messengers *[Rusul]* (peace be upon them). If someone visits a sick person, it will be as if he had paid such visits to all the saints *[auliyā’]* of Allāh, and to all His spiritual deputies *[budalā’]*.[345] If someone attends a funeral service *[jināza]*, it will be as if he had attended the funeral services of all His martyrs *[shuhadā’]*. If someone clothes a true believer *[mu’min]*, Allāh will clothe him from His store of fine garments. If someone treats an orphan kindly, Allāh (Exalted is He) will treat him kindly on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, beneath the shadow of His Heavenly Throne *[‘Arsh]*. If someone attends one of the sessions of religious learning *[majālis al-‘ilm]*, it will be as if he had attended the sessions held by all of Allāh's Prophets *[Anbiyā']* and Messengers *[Rusul]* (peace be upon them).

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[345] See Vol. 2, note 254, p. 175..

It was Wahb ibn Munabbih (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"When Adam (peace be upon him) was sent down to the earth, he wept over his sin for six whole days. Then, on the seventh day, while he was stricken with sorrow and bitterness, and stood with his head bowed low, Allāh (Exalted is He) conveyed to him by way of inspiration *[awhā ilai-hi]*: 'O Adam, what is this trouble you are suffering?' 'My God, *[Ilāhī]*,' he replied, 'Great indeed is my affliction, and my sinful error has encompassed me. I have come to be in the abode of degradation, after that of honor, in the abode of misery, after that of happiness, and in the abode of death and annihilation *[fanā']*, after that of eternal life *[khuld]* and survival in perpetuity *[baqā']*. So how can I not weep over my sinful error?'

"Allāh (Exalted is He) thereupon conveyed to him by way of inspiration: 'O Adam, did I not fashion you for Myself, then choose you over all the rest of My creation, bestow My honor upon you in preference to any other, and confer my love upon you? Did I not create you with My hand, and order My angels to prostrate themselves before you? Were you not at the very center of My noble generosity, and the ultimate degree of My merciful compassion? Yet you disobeyed My commandment, and forgot My covenant. How could you forget My merciful compassion and My gracious favor? By My Might and My Majesty, if I were to fill the earth with men, all of them like you, who would worship Me and glorify Me by night and by day, and would not slacken from My worshipful service *['ibāda]* for the twinkling of an eye, but who then disobeyed Me, I would send them down to the stations reserved for disobedient sinners.'

"Adam (peace be upon him) was so profoundly moved by this, that he wept for three hundred years on top of Mount Everest *[Jabal al-Hind]*. His tears flowed down through all of India's mountain valleys, and from those tears sprouted fruitful trees. Then Gabriel *[Jibrīl]* (peace be upon him) said to him: 'Now you must go to the Sacred House of Allāh [in Mecca], and wait there patiently until the Ten Days *[Ayyām al-'Ashr]* come around. You must then repent to Allāh, so that He may have mercy on your weakness.' He promptly set out on his journey, and with every step he took, the spot where his foot trod became a fertile oasis, while the areas between his steps were left as desert wastes,[346] until he came at last to the House *[Bait]*. He then performed the circumambulation of the House for one whole week, and he wept until he was wading in his tears, which had flooded the ground up to his knees.

"He said: 'There is no god but You. Glory be to You, O Allāh, and with Your praise! I have done something bad, and I have wronged my own self, so forgive me, for You are the Best of those who forgive *[Khairu 'l-ghāfirīn]*, and You are the Best of those who show mercy *[Khairu 'r-Rāhimīn]*.' Allāh then conveyed to him by way of inspiration: 'O Adam, I have indeed bestowed My mercy upon you. I have forgiven you your sin, and I have accepted your repentance.'"

This is mentioned in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Then Adam received certain words	*fa-talaqqā Ādamu*
[of revelation] from his Lord,	*min Rabbi-hi kalimātin*
and He relented toward him.	*fa-tāba 'alai-h:*
He is indeed the Relenting One,	*inna-hu*
the All-Compassionate. (2:37)	*Huwa 't-Tawwābu 'r-Rahīm.*

Thus did Adam (peace be upon him) discover that one of the blessings of the Ten Days *[Ayyām al-'Ashr]* is [the acceptance of] repentance *[tauba]*. The same experience is available to the true believer *[mu'min]* who has disobeyed his Lord *[Rabb]*, and followed his passionate desire in rebellion against his Master *[Maulā]*. If, during these days, he is contrite and repentant *[tāba wa anāba]*, and is guided back to the obedient service *[tā'a]* of Allāh, He will graciously favor him with mercy and forgiveness, and with the transformation *[ibdāl]* of his bad deeds into good deeds, as an act of compassion from Him.

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[346] **Author's note**: According to some accounts, the distance between his feet was three leagues *[farāsikh]*.

Concerning the words of Allāh (Exalted is He) in the Sūra of the Dawn *[Sūrat al-Fajr]*

Your Lord is surely ever on the watch. (89:14)
inna Rabba-ka la-bi'l-mirṣād.

We have already discussed the words in which Allāh (Exalted is He) has sworn:

By the dawn,	*wa 'l-fajri*
and ten nights,	*wa layālin 'ashr:*
and the even and the Odd,	*wa 'sh-shaf'i wa 'l-Watr:*
and the night when it departs,	*wa 'l-laili idhā yasr:*
there surely is an oath	*hal fī dhālika qasamun*
for thinking man. (89:1–5)	*li-dhī hijr.*

Let us now read on, until we come to:

Your Lord is surely ever on the watch. (89:14)	*inna Rabba-ka la-bi'l-mirṣād.*

The "watch *[mirṣād]*" refers to [the observation post or checkpoint on each of] the eight arches *[qanāṭir]* on the bridge over Hell *[jisr Jahannam]*.[347] At the first of these, the servant [of the Lord] will be asked about belief in Allāh *[al-īmān bi'llāh]*, and if he is a true believer *[mu'min]* he will be saved. If not, he will be hurled down into the Fire of Hell.

Then he will move on to the second, and there he will be asked about the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* and the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. If he is lacking with respect to either of these, he will be hurled down into the Fire of Hell. If he correctly performs the acts of bowing *[rukū']* and prostration *[sujūd]*, he will be saved.

Then he will move on to the third, and there he will be asked about the alms-due *[zakāt]*. If he has duly paid it, he will be saved.

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[347] The arches *[qanāṭir]* on the bridge of Hell are variously numbered in the traditional reports. See Vol. 2, p. 269.

Then he will move on to the fourth, and there he will be asked about the fast *[ṣiyām]*. If he has kept it properly, he will be saved.

Then he will move on to the fifth, and there he will be asked about the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* and the Visitation *[ʿUmra]*. If he has duly performed them, he will be saved.

Then he will move on to the sixth, and there he will be asked about loyal trust *[amāna]*. If he has never betrayed it, he will be saved.

Then he will move on to the seventh, and there he will be asked about backbiting *[ghība]*, slander *[namīma]*, and false accusation *[buhtān]*. If he has not committed any of these offenses, he will be saved.

Then he will move on to the eighth, and there he will be asked about the consumption of unlawful food *[akl al-ḥarām]*. If he has not consumed it, he will be saved; otherwise he will be hurled down into the Fire of Hell.

Concerning the commemoration of the Day of *Tarwiyya*.[348]

Allāh (Glory be to Him and Exalted is He) has said:

And proclaim among men	*wa adhdhin fi 'n-nāsi*
the Pilgrimage.	*bi'l-hajji*
They will come to you on foot	*ya'tū-ka rijālan*
and on every lean camel,	*wa 'alā kulli dāmirin*
coming from every deep ravine.	*ya'tīna min kulli fajjin 'amīq.*
(22:27)	

This verse *[āya]* occurs in the Sūra of the Pilgrimage *[Sūrat alḤajj]*, which is one of the most extraordinary Sūras in the Splendid Qur'ān, since some of the revelations it contains are Meccan *[Makkī]* and others Medinan *[Madanī]*, some were received during a stay in a settlement *[ḥadarī]* and others under traveling conditions *[safarī]*, while some are nocturnal *[lailī]* and others diurnal *[nahārī]*. It also contains a revelation that abrogates and supersedes another *[nāsikh]*, as well as some that have been abrogated and superseded *[mansūkh]*.

As for the Meccan revelations, they run from the beginning of the thirtieth verse *[āya]* to the very end of the Sūra, while the Medinan verses run from the start of the fifteenth through to the point where the thirtieth begins. As for the nocturnal section *[al-lailī]*, it runs from the first verse through to the point where the fifth begins. As for the diurnal section *[an-nahārī]*, it starts at the top of the fifth and continues through to the point where the ninth begins. As for the section revealed during a stay in a settlement *[al-ḥadarī]*, it runs to the point where the twentieth verse begins. This latter section has been ascribed to Medina, on account of its proximity [the proximity of the settlement concerned] to that city.

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[348] For the origin and meaning of the term *Tarwiyya*, see p. 198 below.

in unbelief, by which the unbelievers are led astray. (9:37)	*yuḍallu bi-hi 'lladhīna kafarū.*

The historical background to this is as follows: When the Arabs of the Time of Ignorance [*Jāhiliyya*] were about to make the return journey from Minā [at the conclusion of the Pilgrimage], it was customary for a man called Nuʿaim ibn Thaʿlaba, the tribal chief of the Banī Kināna, to stand up and say: "I am surely not one to be accused of a sin or reproached with a fault [*lā uhābu wa lā uʿābu*], nor is a judgment of mine to be rejected." They would then say to him: "You have spoken the truth. Now postpone a month for us!" What they meant by this was: "For our convenience, defer the sacredness of the month of Muharram and shift it to the month of Ṣafar,[11] so that we can treat Muharram as profane." Their motive was simply to avoid having three months in a row during which they could not engage in predatory expeditions, since raiding for plunder and pillage had come to be their regular means of livelihood. The postponement [*insāʾ*][12] would be effective for one year,[13] and then they would revert to the situation where Muḥarram was regarded as sacred and Ṣafar as free from taboo.

This should help to explain why the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) added a qualifying word to the name Rajab, and why he defined it by placing it between two points of reference. In the first place, he called it Rajab Mudar [The Rajab of the tribe of Muḍar], because the tribe of Mudar had always gone to great lengths in extolling its dignity, exalting its importance, and respecting its sacredness. In the second place, he fixed its position in the calendar by stating categorically that it comes between Jumādā and Shaʿbān, as a precaution against the kind of juggling to and fro that happened when the sacredness of Muharram was transferred to Ṣafar. By drawing attention to the special quality of the month, and by fixing its position in the calendar, he emphasized its importance and made sure that it would be treated as sacred for all time to come.

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[11] Ṣafar is the second month in the Islāmic calendar.

[12] **Author's note:** This concept of postponement [*nasāʾ*, from the triliteral root *n-s-ʾ*] has given rise to the expressions: *nasaʾa 'llāhu fī ajalihi* and *ansaʾa 'llāhu ajalahu* [both meaning: "Allāh has postponed his appointed term, i.e., prolonged his life."]

[13] As E. W. Lane points out (in his *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. N–S–ʾ): "This [postponement], as appears from what is said in the Qurʾān 9:37, was not done every year." He is referring to the second sentence in that verse [*āya*] of the Qurʾān, immediately following the sentence quoted in the text above, where Allāh (Exalted is He) says:

One year they treat it as profane, and another year they treat it as sacred [*yuḥillūnahu ʿāman wa yuḥarrimūnahu ʿāman*]

although the Hereafter is better	*wa 'l-ākhiratu khairun*
and more lasting.	*wa abqā.*
Surely this is in the ancient scrolls:	*inna hādhā la-fi 'ṣ-Ṣuḥufi 'l-ūlā:*
the scrolls of Abraham and Moses.	*Ṣuḥufi Ibrāhīma wa Mūsā.*
(87:6–19)	

The second instance is His statement (Exalted is He):

Allāh will judge between you	*Allāhu yaḥkumu baina-kum*
on the Day of Resurrection	*yauma 'l-qiyāmati*
concerning that over which	*fī-mā kuntum*
you used to be at odds. (22:69)	*fī-hi takhtalifūn.*

This verse was subsequently abrogated *[nusikhat]* by the Verse of the Sword *[Āyat as-Saif]*.[349]

The third instance is [the commandment]:

And strive for Allāh's sake	*wa jāhidū fi 'llāhi*
with all the effort He deserves.	*ḥaqqa jihādi-h.*
(22:78)	

—since this was subsequently abrogated *[nusikhat]* by His words (Exalted is He):

So observe your duty to Allāh	*fa-'ttaqu 'llāha*
as far as you are able, and listen,	*ma 'staṭa'tum*
and obey, and spend on what	*wa 'sma'ū wa aṭī'ū*
is best for yourselves.	*wa anfiqū khairan li-anfusi-kum:*
And whoever is guarded	*wa man yūqa shuḥḥa*
against his own selfish greed,	*nafsi-hi*
such are those who will prosper.	*fa-ulā'ika humu 'l-mufliḥūn.*
(64:16)	

As for the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

And proclaim among men	*wa adhdhin fi 'n-nāsi*
the Pilgrimage.	*bi'l-ḥajji.*

—they are His way of saying: "O Abraham *[yā Ibrāhīm]*, summon your offspring, and other true believers *[mu'minīn]* among the children of Adam, to perform the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*."

They will come to you on foot	*ya'tū-ka rijālan*

—that is to say, they will come to you walking, using their own legs for transport,

and on every lean camel	*wa 'alā kulli ḍāmirin*

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[349] The 9th Sūra, usually entitled *at-Tauba* [Repentance] or *al-Barā'a* [Absolution], is also called *Sūrat as-Saif* [Sūra of the Sword]. The word *saif* [sword] does not occur in the actual text of the Qur'ān.

—that is to say, riding on camels [*ibil*].

> coming from every deep ravine. *ya'tīna min kulli fajjin 'amīq*
> (22:27)

—that is to say, from every distant land and by every distant route. Allāh (Exalted is He) said these words to Abraham [*Ibrāhīm*] (peace be upon him) as soon as he had completed the construction of the Sacred House [*al-Bait al-Harām*]. "My God [*Ilāhī*]," he asked, "who will make this House his destination?" So He commanded him to "proclaim among men the Pilgrimage." In response to this command, he climbed the slope of Abū Qubais, the mountain of which as-Ṣafā is a foothill, and proclaimed at the top of his voice: "O you people, answer the call of your Lord! Allāh is commanding you to perform the Pilgrimage to His House." Abraham's proclamation was heard by every believing man [*mu'min*] and every believing woman [*mu'mina*] on the face of the earth, as well as by those still in the loins of men and the wombs of women.

On this day, therefore, the declaration of readiness to serve [*talbiyya*][350] is a response to the summons of Abraham [*Ibrāhīm*] (peace be upon him), issued at the command of his Lord, for they all replied: "At Your service, time and time again [*labbaik*]!" If anyone gives that same response, on this Day [of *Tarwiyya*], he will not leave this world until he has visited this House [of Allāh].

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[350] See n. 167 on p. 88 above.

Concerning the excellent merits of one who enters the state of consecration for the Pilgrimage *[aḥrama bi'l-Ḥajj]*, who declares his readiness to serve *[labbā]*, and who sets out for the House [of Allāh] and makes his approach thereto.

As reported by Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said:

"We were in the company of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), when a group of people arrived from Yemen. They said: 'May our mothers and fathers be your ransom! Will you tell us about the special merits of the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*?' He said:

> "'Yes! If any man sets out from his home, as a Pilgrim *[Ḥājj]* or a Visitant *[Mu'tamir]*, whenever he lifts a foot, or sets a foot down on the ground, sins are scattered from his feet, just as leaves are scattered from the trees. Then, when he reaches the city of Medina, shakes my hand, and salutes me with the greeting of peace *[salām]*, the angels will likewise salute him with the greeting of peace. Then, when he reaches Dhu'l-Halīfa,[351] and performs the major ritual ablution *[ightasal]*, Allāh will purify him of his sins. When he puts on two new pieces of clothing, Allāh will renew his good deeds for him. When he says:

I wait intent upon Your service,	*labbaika*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
time and time again.	
Doubly at Your service!	*labbaik.*

> —Allāh (Exalted is He) will respond to him with:

I wait intent upon your service,	*labbaika*
time and time again,	
and upon aiding your cause,	*wa sa'daik.*
time and time again.	
I hear your speech,	*asma'u kalāma-ka*
and I am watching you!	*wa anẓuru ilai-k.*

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[351] Dhu'l-Halīfa is the assembly point *[mīqāt]* for Pilgrims approaching Mecca from the direction of Medina. For a full account of this, and other details connected with the rites of the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, see Vol. 1, pp. 26–52.

> "'When he enters Mecca, performs the circumambulation [of the Kaʿba], and walks at a brisk pace *[saʿy]* between aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwa, Allāh will bestow good things upon him.
>
> "'When he performs the rite of standing at ʿArafāt,[352] and voices clamor at him with all kinds of needs, Allāh (Exalted is He) will hail them [him and all those like him] as shining examples, saying to the angels of the seven heavens: "My angels, and inhabitants of My heavens, you must surely notice My servants! See how they come to Me from every deep ravine *[min kulli fajjin ʿamīq]*,[353] disheveled and thick with dust. They have spent their wealth and wearied their bodies, so, by My Might and My Majesty and My Honor *[wa ʿIzzatī wa Jalālī wa Karamī]*, I shall give the evildoer among them [as ransom] for the one who does good, and I shall set them apart from sins, as on the day when their mothers gave them birth."
>
> "'When they throw pebbles at the pillars *[jimār]* [representing the devil], and shave their heads, and visit the House [of Allāh], an angelic herald will cry out, from the inner recess of the Heavenly Throne *[ʿArsh]*: "Now go back home, having been forgiven, and set about your work from a new beginning!"'"

As we are told in one traditional report, an Arab of the desert *[Aʿrābī]* once came to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and said to him: "O Messenger of Allāh, I set out with the intention of performing the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, but I have missed it. I am a man wearing a loincloth *[muttazir]*—meaning one who is in a state of consecration *[muḥrim]*—so tell me what I must do, in order to obtain the reward of the Pilgrimage, or something like the reward of the Pilgrimage." On hearing this, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) turned to the man and said to him: "Look over there, at [Mount] Abū Qais. Even if you possessed a stack of fine gold, the size of Abū Qais, and you applied it all to the cause of Allāh, you would not obtain what the Pilgrim *[Ḥājj]* obtains."

He then went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "Whenever the Pilgrim *[Ḥājj]* picks something up, or puts something down, while making preparations for his journey, Allāh will record ten good deeds in his favor, erase ten bad deeds from his debit column, and advance his spiritual progress by ten degrees. Once he has mounted his camel, Allāh will likewise improve his record for him, each time the camel lifts a hoof or sets it down on the ground. When he circumambulates the House *[ṭāfa bi'l-Bait]*, he will leave his sins behind. When he walks at a brisk pace *[saʿy]* between aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwa, he will leave his sins behind. When he performs the rite of standing at ʿArafāt, he will leave his sins behind. When he stands at the Sacred Monument *[al-Mashʿar al-Ḥarām]*, he will leave his sins behind. When he

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[352] See pp. 211–15 below.

[353] This expression occurs in the verse *[āya]* of the Qurʾān (22:27) quoted on p. 188 above.

> throws pebbles at the pillars [*jimār*] [representing the devil], he will leave his sins behind."

Then he said to the Arab tribesman [*A'rābī*]:

> "How can you hope to obtain what the Pilgrim [*Ḥājj*] has obtained!"

'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh ennoble his countenance) is reported as having said: "I was circumambulating the Sacred House [*al-Bait al-Ḥarām*], together with the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so I said to him: 'O Messenger of Allāh, let my father and my mother be your ransom! What is this House?' 'O 'Alī,' he replied,

> "'Allāh (Exalted is He) established this House in the abode of this world, as an expiation [*kaffāra*] for the sins of my Community [*Ummati*].'

"Then I said: "Let my father and my mother be your ransom, O Messenger of Allāh! What is this Black Stone [*al-Ḥajar al-Aswad*]?' To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> 'That is actually a jewel [*jauhara*], which used to be in the Garden of Paradise, until Allāh sent it down into the abode of this world. It once emitted rays of light, like the rays of the sun, but its color has changed, and its has blackness become intense, since it was touched by the hands those who attribute partners to Allāh [*mushrikīn*].'"

As reported by Ibn Abī Malīka, 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> Every night and every day, one hundred and twenty merciful blessings descend upon this House. Sixty of them are for the benefit of those who circumambulate the Sacred House [*al-Bait al-Ḥarām*]. Forty of them are for the benefit of those who practice worshipful seclusion [*'ākifīn*] around the Sacred House. Twenty of them are for the benefit of those who simply turn their eyes toward it.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is also reported as having said:

> Allāh (Exalted is He) says: "If there be any servant [of Mine]—to whom I have granted good health in his physical body, and to whom I have granted ample opportunities in his life—who lets three years go by, without coming to visit this House, he is surely deprived; he is surely deprived!"

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī [354] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "We performed the Pilgrimage [*ḥajajnā*] in the company of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him), at the beginning of his Caliphate *[Khilāfa]*. Having entered the Mosque *[Masjid]*, he eventually came to stand by the [Black] Stone *[Ḥajar]*. 'You are just a stone,' said he, 'and you cause neither harm nor benefit. If I had not seen Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) kissing you, I would not have kissed you.'"

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[354] See n. 59 on p. 85 above.

"When 'Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) heard this, he said to him: 'You must not say such a thing, O Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Mu'minīn]*, for it can indeed cause both harm and benefit, with Allāh's permission. If only you had read the Qur'ān, and understood what it contains, you would not contradict me!' 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) responded by asking him: 'O father of al-Ḥasan, and what is its explanatory reference *[ta'wīl]* in the Book of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)?' So he told him: '[It is referred to implicitly in] the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

And [remember] when your Lord	*wa idh akhadha Rabbu-ka*
took from the Children of Adam,	*min banī Ādama*
from their loins, their offspring,	*min ẓuhūri-him dhurriyyata-hum*
and made them testify	*wa ashhada-hum*
concerning themselves:	*'alā anfusi-him*
"Am I not your Lord?"	*a-lastu bi Rabbi-kum*
They said: "Yes indeed, we testify."	*qālū balā shahidnā.*
(7:172)	

"'For, when they confessed their servitude *['ubūdiyya]*, He recorded their confession on a sheet of paper. Then He summoned the Stone *[Ḥajar]*, and caused it to digest that sheet of paper. It is therefore present at this spot, as the trusted agent *[amīn]* of Allāh, so that it can bear witness, on the Day of Resurrection, in favor of those who appear before it here.' "'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) then said: 'O father of al-Ḥasan, Allāh has installed more than a little knowledge inside of you!'"

As we learn from another traditional report,[355] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The Pilgrims *[Ḥujjāj]* and the Visitants *['Ummār]* are the delegation *[wafd]* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). If they appeal to Him, He will answer them, and if they seek His forgiveness, He will forgive them.

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[355] **Author's note**. For this report, the chain of transmission is as follows. **Az-Zuhrī—Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib—'Umar ibn Salama** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

from the Fire of Hell and I will cause him to enter the Garden of Paradise. It must therefore be pronounced as the preface to your recitation of the Scriptures, and as the introduction to your performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, for if anyone should die in the course of a recitation or prayer begun with these words, [the pair of angels called] Munkar and Nakīr will not subject him to their usual postmortem interrogation, the agonies of death *[sakarāt al-mawt]* and the crushing pressure of the grave will be alleviated in his case, and My mercy *[raḥma]* will be upon him. I shall allow him to have plenty of space inside his grave. I shall give him plenty of light within his grave. I shall let him have light therein to the full extent of his faculty of sight.

"'When I bring him forth from his grave [on the Day of Resurrection], it will be with his body perfectly clean and his face most radiant, shining with a brilliant glow. When I call him to account, I shall make it an easy reckoning for him to pass, and I shall tip the scale of the balance in his favor. I shall provide him with perfect illumination on the Bridge *[Ṣirāṭ]*, so that he can cross over safely and enter the Garden of Paradise. I shall also command the herald to announce him, when he is ushered onto the Fields of the Resurrection *['Araṣāt al-Qiyāma]*, as one who is worthy of bliss and forgiveness.'

"Jesus (peace be upon him) then responded with the question: 'O Allāh! O my Lord! Can this be specially for me?' So the Lord told him: 'For you in particular, as well as for those who follow you, who conduct themselves in keeping with your example, and who speak as you speak. It is also for Aḥmad and his Community *[Umma]*, after you.'

"Jesus (peace be upon him) conveyed this news to his followers, to whom he said:

> I am also bringing good tidings of a Messenger who shall come after me, whose name shall be Aḥmad [Praiseworthy]. (61:6)[113]

"When he had explained to them that the name Aḥmad [Praiseworthy] would be in keeping with the excellence of his nature, his character, his refinement, and so on and so forth, Jesus (peace be upon him) accepted from his followers their solemn covenant to believe in this coming Messenger. Later, when Allāh (Exalted is He) raised him up to heaven, he reemphasized the importance of this covenant to his companions. In the course of time, however, when all the Disciples and all the other

never be discontented. We are the women who are forever young, so we shall never grow senile and decrepit. We are the women who are always clothed, so we shall never go naked. We are the women who are good, the women who are beautiful, the wives of a truly noble people."

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[113] *wa mubashshiran bi-Rasūlin ya'tī min ba'di'smuhu Aḥmad.*

As for the birds of the Garden of Paradise, each of them has seventy thousand feathers. Each of those feathers has a different color, quite unlike that of any other. The size of each bird amongst them is a mile in width by a mile in length. Whenever the true believer *[mu'min]* desires them to provide him with something to satisfy his appetite, he has only to fetch a bird and place it inside the bowl from which he intends to eat. The bird will then flap its wings and, as it rises, seventy kinds of food will fall from it into the bowl—such as cooked fare and all sorts of other tasty morsels. The flavor of this food is more delicious than honeydew, its tenderness is softer than butter, and its whiteness is whiter than buttermilk. As soon as he has eaten some of it, the bird will flap its wings again and fly away, without shedding a single feather in the process.

So that they can always enjoy this kind of service, their birds and their riding animals are carefully tended in the pastures of the Garden of Paradise surrounding their palatial mansions.

Allāh (Exalted is He) will give the people of the Garden of Paradise signet rings of gold for them to wear, these being the signet rings of eternal life. Then He will give them signet rings made of sapphire and pearls. That will be when they visit Him in the Abode of Peace *[Dār as-Salām]*.

When the people of the Garden of Paradise go to visit their Lord, they will eat and drink and thoroughly enjoy themselves.

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

The Lord of Might and Glory *[Rabb al-'Izza]* (Almighty and Majestic is He) will say: "O David, extol Me with your beautiful voice!" David will then extol Him for as long as Allāh (Exalted is He) wishes this celebration of His praise to continue, so that nothing in the Garden of Paradise will miss the opportunity to hear the beauty of his voice and its delightful sweetness. Then the Lord of Might and Glory (Almighty and Majestic is He) will present them with fine clothing and adornments. Then they will depart to rejoin their wives.

Every man among the people of the Garden of Paradise has access to the benefits provided by a tree called the Tree of Bliss *[Tūbā]*[376] Whenever one of them wishes to dress himself up in clothes of extremely high quality, he has only to make his way to the Tree of Bliss *[Tūbā]*, the spathes or envelopes *[akmām]* of which will at once be opened up for him. These wardrobes are of six different kinds, each one of them containing seventy types of clothing. No article of clothing has the same color as any other, nor is any garment tailored from the same fabric as another. He may therefore take his pick, selecting whichever of these items he wishes to wear.

The following message is inscribed on the wives of the people of the Garden of Paradise—on the area between the throat and the breast of every woman amongst them: "You are my dearly beloved, and I am your dearly beloved *[anta*

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[376] See note 329 on p. 237 above.

Differences of opinion concerning how and why the Day of *Tarwiyya* came to be so called.

The religious scholars have held various opinions concerning how at why this day came to be called the Day of *Tarwiyya*. [What is beyond dispute is that] *Tarwiyya* is the name of the eighth day of the month of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja, and it is the day on which the people [who are performing the Pilgrimage] depart from Mecca in the direction of [the nearby valley of] Minā.

Some say it was called *Tarwiyya* because it is the day when people supply themselves with water from the well of Zamzam [in preparation for the journey to Minā]. From the standpoint of Arabic linguistics, *tarwiyya* is a verbal noun, formed on the pattern called *taf'īla*, and derived from the same root, *r–w–y*, as the verb *irtawā*. The expression "*irtawā*" is a concise way of saying that the subject of the verb "drew water from a source, scooped it up, drank some of it, and used some of it to bathe himself." On that day, people do indeed scoop water from the well of Zamzam, frequently and in considerable quantities.

Others have said: "It came to be called [the Day of] *Tarwiyya* because of the dream that Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) experienced during the night thereof, in which he saw that he was going to sacrifice his son. When the morning came, he pondered *[tarawwā]* and reflected, asking himself whether it had come from the Enemy, Satan *[ash-Shaiṭān]*, or from the Friend, the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]*. He spent the rest of that day thinking about what he had seen, and then, when the Day of 'Arafa came around, he was told: 'You must do what you are commanded to do.' He recognized and understood *['arafa]* that it came from the Friend *[Ḥabīb]*, and this is how the Day of 'Arafa acquired its name."

Concerning the four summoning calls *[da'awāt]*.

When Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) gave the order:

And proclaim among men	*wa adhdhin fī 'n-nāsi*
the Pilgrimage.	*bi'l-ḥajji*
They will come to you on foot	*ya'tū-ka rijālan*
and on every lean camel,	*wa 'alā kulli ḍāmirin*
coming from every deep ravine.	*ya'tīna min kulli fajjin 'amīq.*
(22:27)	

—He was commanding [Abraham] His Bosom Friend *[Khalīl]* to summon His servants to His House.

There are four summoning calls *[da'awāt]*, namely:

1. The summons *[da'wa]* issued by Allāh to His servants. When Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) said:

And Allāh summons	*wa 'llāhu yad'ū*
to the Abode of Peace. (10:25)	*ilā dāri 's-salām.*

—He summoned them from one abode to another abode *[dār]*. He summoned them from the abode of the imposition of burdensome duties *[dār at-taklīf]* to the abode of the bestowal of honors *[dār at-tashrīf]*, from the abode of absence and lack of vision *[dār al-ghaiba]* to the abode of presence and direct perception *[dār al-mushāhada]*, from the abode of transitory existence *[dār az-zawāl]* to the abode of survival in perpetuity *[dār al-baqā']*, and from the abode of disaster *[dār al-balwā]* to the Abode of the Master *[Dār al-Maulā]*. He summoned them from one abode—the first part of which is weeping, the middle of which is anxiety, and the last part of which is annihilation *[fanā']*—to another Abode, the first part of which is giving, the middle of which is contentment, and the last part of which is reunion *[liqā']*.

2. The summons *[da'wa]* issued by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He summoned his Community *[Umma]* to the religion

of Islām. From the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Summon to the way of your Lord	*ud'u ilā sabīli Rabbi-ka*
with wisdom	*bi'l-ḥikmati*
and good admonition,	*wa 'l-maw'iẓati 'l-ḥasanati*
and dispute with them	*wa jādil-hum*
in the better way.	*bi'llatī hiya aḥsan:*
Surely your Lord is very well Aware	*inna Rabba-ka Huwa A'lamu*
of those who have gone astray	*bi-man ḍalla*
from His way,	*'an sabīli-hi*
and He is very well Aware	*wa Huwa A'lamu*
of those who are guided aright.	*bi'l-muhtadīn.*
(16:125)	

—it is clear that the summons is for him to issue (Allāh bless him and give him peace), but that guidance *[hudāya]* is not his reponsibility. As he himself said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> I have been sent as a guide *[hādī]*, although I am not responsible for anything, where guidance *[hudāya]* is concerned. By the same token, Iblīs[358] has been sent as a misleader *[ghāwī]*, although he is not responsible for anything, as far as error *[ḍalāla]* is concerned.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

You do not guide whomever you like,	*inna-ka lā tahdī man aḥbabta*
but Allāh guides whomever He wills.	*wa lākinna 'llāha yahdī man yashā'.*
(28:56)	

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) begged that his paternal uncle, Abū Ṭālib, might receive guidance, but he declined to be guided [to Islām], yet Allāh guided Wahshī, the savage killer of Ḥamza (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), [so that he came to accept Islām]. It seems that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) was saying to His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "O Muhammad, it is incumbent upon you to issue the summons *[da'wa]*"—as when He said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

O Messenger,	*yā ayyuha 'r-Rasūlu*
deliver that which has been	*balligh mā unzila*
sent down to you from your Lord.	*ilai-ka min Rabbi-k.*
(5:67)	

O Prophet,	*yā ayyuha 'n-Nabiyyu*
We have sent you as a witness	*innā arsalnā-ka shāhidan*
and a bringer of good tidings	*wa mubashshiran*
and a warner,	*wa nadhīrā:*

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[358] See note 314 on p. 158 above.

and as one who summons unto Allāh	*wa dā'iyan ila 'llāhi*
by His leave, and as a lamp	*bi-idhni-hi wa sirājan*
that sheds light. (33:45,46)	*munīrā*

—"and intercession *[shafā'a]* is conferred upon you. As for the granting of requests *[ijāba]* and the provision of right guidance *[hidāya]*, that is solely My responsibility." Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

Light upon light. Allāh guides	*nūrun 'alā nūr: yahdi 'llāhu*
to His light whom He will.	*li-nūri-hi man yashā':*
And Allāh speaks to mankind	*wa yaḍribu 'llāhu 'l-*
in allegories,	*amthāla li'n-nās:*
for Allāh is Knower of all things.	*wa 'llāhu bi-kulli shai'in 'Alīm.*
(24:35)	

—and He has said (Exalted is He):

And if We had so willed,	*wa law shi'nā*
We could have given every soul	*la-ātainā kulla nafsin*
its guidance,	*hudā-hā wa lākin*
but now My word is realized:	*ḥaqqa 'l-qaulu*
I shall indeed fill Hell with jinn	*min-nī la-amla'anna jahannama*
and human beings all together.	*mina 'l-jinnati wa 'n-nāsi ajma'īn.*
(32:13)	

3. The muezzin *[mu'adhdhin]* summons to the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and to the abode of the commandment of Allāh (Exalted is He). Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Who speaks better than one	*wa man aḥsanu qaulan*
who summons to Allāh	*mim-man da'ā ila 'llāhi*
and acts righteously? (41:33)	*wa 'amila ṣāliḥā.*

As reported on the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When the muezzins *[mu'adhdhinīn]* and those who declare their readiness to serve *[mulabbīn]* emerge from their graves, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, the muezzin will give the call to prayer, and the *mulabbī* will declare his readiness to serve. Everything within range of the muezzin's voice will seek forgiveness on his behalf. Everything that hears the sound of his voice, everything moist and dry, such as trees and clay, will testify on his behalf. For the good deeds of every human being who prays *[ṣallā]* in that place of worship *[masjid]*, an equivalent amount will be recorded in the muezzin's credit column. In the space between the call to prayer *[adhān]* and the final announcement *[iqāma]* [immediately before the prayer], Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant him everything he asks for, whether it be the immediate enjoyment of some worldly benefit, or relief from something bad, or something to be kept in store for him in the hereafter.

It is related that a man once came to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and said: "O Messenger of Allāh, tell me about one single good deed, by means of which I shall enter the Garden of Paradise." To this he replied: "You must become the muezzin [*mu'adhdhin*] of your people, so that they congregate, because of you, to perform their ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]." The man said: "O Messenger of Allāh, what if I cannot do it?" He said: "In that case, you must become the prayer leader [*imām*] of your people, so that they follow your lead in their performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]." When man said: "What if I am unable to act in that capacity?" he told him: "Then you must join the first row [of worshippers]."

'Ā'isha, the Mother of the Believers [*Umm al-Mu'minīn*] (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: "This Qur'ānic verse [*āya*] was revealed in connection with the muezzins [*mu'adhdhinīn*]:

Who speaks better than one	*wa man aḥsanu qawlan*
who summons to Allāh	*mim-man da'ā ila 'llāhi*
and acts righteously?' (41:33)	*wa 'amila ṣāliḥā.*

—meaning: 'one who summons his fellow creatures to the [prescribed] ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], and who performs a [voluntary] ritual prayer between the call [*adhān*] and the final announcement [*iqāma*] [immediately before the prescribed prayer].'"

As reported on the authority of Abū Umāma al-Bāhilī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The muezzin [*mu'adhdhin*] will be granted forgiveness on a scale corresponding to the range of his voice. He will also receive a reward equivalent to that of the worshippers who pray [*man ṣallā*] together with him, without anything being deducted from their rewards.

According to another traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The invalid is the guest of Allāh. As long as he is suffering from his illness, each and every day, the good work of seventy martyrs [*shahīd*] is raised aloft [to be recorded in his favor]. Then, if Allāh cures him of his sickness, he will be as free from his sins as on the day when his mother gave him birth. If He decrees death for him, He will cause him to enter the Garden of Paradise without any reckoning.

One of the righteous has said: "The muezzin *[mu'adhdhin]* is the chamberlain *[hājib]* of Allāh (Exalted is He). For every call to prayer *[adhān]*, he is granted the spiritual reward of a thousand Prophets *[alf Nabī]*. The prayer leader *[imām]* is Allāh's chief minister *[wazīr]*. For every ritual prayer *[salāt]* he leads, he is granted the spiritual reward of a thousand champions of truth *[alf siddīq]*. The religious scholar *['ālim]* is the trusted agent *[wakīl]* of Allāh (Exalted is He). For every tradition *[hadīth]* he studies, he will be granted a light on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, and the worshipful service *['ibāda]* of a thousand years will be recorded in his credit column. As for the students of religion *[muta'allimūn]*, men and women alike, they are the attentive servants of Allāh, so their recompense can be none other than the Garden of Paradise."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, the people with the tallest necks [i.e., those who hold their heads highest] will be the muezzins *[mu'adhdhinūn]*.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> If someone gives the call to prayer *[adhdhana]* for seven years, Allāh will emancipate him from the Fire of Hell, provided that his intention *[niyya]* is good.

To quote yet another saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant forgiveness to the muezzin *[mu'adhdhin]* on a scale corresponding to the range of his voice. Everything that hears him, be it moist or dry, will vouch for his deserving character.

4. As for the fourth summons *[da'wa]*, it is the summons issued by Abraham, the Bosom Friend *[Ibrāhīm al-Khalīl]* (peace be upon him), in response to the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And proclaim among men	*wa adhdhin fi 'n-nāsi*
the Pilgrimage.	*bi'l-hajji*
They will come to you on foot	*ya'tū-ka rijālan*
and on every lean camel,	*wa 'alā kulli dāmirin*
coming from every deep ravine.	*ya'tīna min kulli fajjin 'amīq.*
(22:27)	

This we have already discussed, in the first part of [this subsection of] the present discourse *[majlis]*.

The Ninth Discourse

Concerning the special qualities of the Day of ʿArafa.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

Today I have perfected	*al-yauma akmaltu*
your religion for you,	*la-kum dīna-kum*
and I have completed	*wa atmamtu*
My blessing upon you,	*ʿalai-kum niʿmatī*
and I have approved Islām	*wa raḍītu*
for you as religion. (5:3)	*la-kumu 'l-islāma dīnā.*

This verse *[āya]* was sent down at ʿArafāt, and it is thereby distinguished from the rest of the verses in this Sūra (viz., *Sūrat al-Māʾida* [Sūra of the Table]), because they were all revealed at Medina. His statement (Exalted is He):

Today I have perfected	*al-yauma akmaltu*
your religion for you.	*la-kum dīna-kum.*

—means: "[I have perfected] the laws of your religion *[sharāʾiʿ dīni-kum]* pertaining to that which is lawful *[ḥalāl]* and that which is unlawful *[ḥarām]*."

and I have completed	*wa atmamtu*
My blessing upon you,	*ʿalai-kum niʿmatī*

—that is to say: "[I have completed] the bestowal of My grace *[minnatī]* upon you, inasmuch as no unbeliever *[kāfir]*, nor anyone who attributes partners to Me *[mushrik]*, will participate in your gathering at ʿArafāt."

and I have approved Islām	*wa raḍītu*
for you as religion. (5:3)	*la-kumu 'l-islāma dīnā.*

—in other words: "I have chosen for you the religion of Islām."

This Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* was revealed at 'Arafāt, on the Day of 'Arafa, during the Farewell Pilgrimage *[Ḥajjat al-Wadā']*. After its revelation, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) remained in this world for eighty-one days, then Allāh (Exalted is He) took him to His mercy *[raḥma]* and His good pleasure *[riḍwān]*. That is traditionally reported on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), among other experts in Qur'ānic commentary and interpretation *[mufassirīn]*.

It was Muhammad ibn Ka'b al-Quraẓī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "This Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* was revealed on the day of the conquest *[fatḥ]* of Mecca."

According to Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), "Today *[al-yauma]*..." is a reference to the sending forth of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and the day of his appointment to Messengership *[Risāla]*."

Other interpretations include the following:

- "Today *[al-yauma]*" is a reference to the day of the eternity that has no beginning *[yaum al-azal]*, while "completion *[itmām]*" is a reference to time *[al-waqt]*, and "approval *[riḍā]*" is a reference to the eternity that has no end *[al-abad]*.
- The perfection of the religion *[kamāl ad-dīn]* resides in two things, namely: (1) the direct knowledge *[ma'rifa]* of Allāh (Exalted is He), and (2) following the exemplary practice *[Sunna]* of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).
- The perfection of the religion *[kamāl ad-dīn]* resides in the sense of security *[amn]* and freedom from distraction *[farāgh]*, because when you feel secure with what Allāh has guaranteed to you, you become free to devote yourself to His worshipful service *['ibāda]*.
- The perfection of the religion *[kamāl ad-dīn]* resides in renouncing all claim to personal power and strength, and returning from everything to the One to whom everything belongs.
- The perfection of religion *[kamāl ad-dīn]* was accomplished when the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* was restored to the Day of 'Arafa, because they used to perform the Pilgrimage in every month of every year. When Allāh restored the Pilgrimage to the appointed time *[mīqāt]*, and

This Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* was revealed at 'Arafāt, on the Day of 'Arafa, during the Farewell Pilgrimage *[Ḥajjat al-Wadā']*. After its revelation, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) remained in this world for eighty-one days, then Allāh (Exalted is He) took him to His mercy *[raḥma]* and His good pleasure *[riḍwān]*. That is traditionally reported on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), among other experts in Qur'ānic commentary and interpretation *[mufassirīn]*.

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- The perfection of the religion *[kamāl ad-dīn]* resides in two things, namely: (1) the direct knowledge *[ma'rifa]* of Allāh (Exalted is He), and (2) following the exemplary practice *[Sunna]* of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).
- The perfection of the religion *[kamāl ad-dīn]* resides in the sense of security *[amn]* and freedom from distraction *[farāgh]*, because when you feel secure with what Allāh has guaranteed to you, you become free to devote yourself to His worshipful service *['ibāda]*.
- The perfection of the religion *[kamāl ad-dīn]* resides in renouncing all claim to personal power and strength, and returning from everything to the One to whom everything belongs.
- The perfection of religion *[kamāl ad-dīn]* was accomplished when the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* was restored to the Day of 'Arafa, because they used to perform the Pilgrimage in every month of every year. When Allāh restored the Pilgrimage to the appointed time *[mīqāt]*, and

made it a compulsory religious duty *[farīda]*. He sent down the Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*:

Today I have perfected	*al-yauma akmaltu*
your religion for you.	*la-kum dīna-kum*

[Although it is usually translated by the English word "religion"] the term *dīn* has several applications, which Allāh has enumerated in the Qur'ān. In some instances, the meaning pertains to this world, as when He uses the expression "in the worldly domain *[dīn]* of the king," in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

So he started the search	*fa-bada'a bi-au'iyati-him*
with their sacks,	*qabla wi'ā'i*
before his brother's sack,	*akhī-hi thumma*
then he pulled it out of his	*'stakhraja-hā*
brother's sack.	*min wi'ā'i akhī-h:*
Thus did We contrive for	*ka-dhālika kidnā*
Joseph's sake.	*li-Yūsuf:*
He could not have taken his brother,	*mā kāna li-ya'khudha akhā-hu*
in the worldly domain of the king,	*fī dīni 'l-maliki*
except that Allāh so willed.	*illā an yashā'a 'llāh.*
(12:76)	

In a context like this, the term *dīn* applies to a person's status in this world *[dunyā]*, his habitual behavior *['āda]* and his pattern of conduct *[sīra]*. Other meanings of the term *dīn* include the following:

- Reckoning, or calling to account *[ḥisāb]*, as in His statement (Almighty and Glorious is He):

That is the right *dīn* (9:36)	*dhālika 'd-dīnu 'l-qayyim:*

—which means: "[That is] the correct, honorable and straightforward reckoning *[al-ḥisāb al-mustaqīm]*."

- Recompense *[jazā']*, as in His statement (Almighty and Glorious is He):

On that day Allāh will pay them	*yauma'idhin yuwaffī-himu 'llāhu*
their true *dīn* in full,	*dīna-humu 'l-haqqa*
and they will know	*wa ya'lamūna*
that Allāh is the Manifest Truth.	*anna 'llāha Huwa 'l-haqqu 'l-mubīn.*
(24:25)	

—where "their true *dīn*" means "the recompense that is most just *[al-jazā' al-a'dal]*."

- Legally binding judgment *[hukm]*, as in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The fornicatress and the fornicator,	*az-zāniyatu wa 'z-zānī*
scourge each one of them	*fa-'jlidū kulla wāhidin*
with a hundred stripes.	*min-humā mi'ata jalda.*
And do not let pity	*wa lā ta'khudh-kum*
for the two of them deter you,	*bi-himā ra'fatun*
when it is a matter of Allāh's *dīn*,	*fī dīni 'llāhi*
if you truly believe in Allāh	*in kuntum tu'minūna bi'llāhi*
and the Last Day.	*wa 'l-yaumi 'l-ākhir:*
And let a party of the believers	*wa 'l-yashhad 'adhāba-humā*
witness their chastisement. (24:2)	*tā'ifatun mina 'l-mu'minīn.*

—where "Allāh's *dīn*" means "the legally binding judgment *[ḥukm]* of Allāh."

- The Festival *['Īd]*, as in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

And leave alone those	*wa dhari 'lladhīna 'ttakhadhū*
who treat their *dīn*	*dīna-hum*
as a sport and a diversion. (6:70)	*la'iban wa lahwan*

—where "their *dīn*" means "their Festival *['Īd]*."

- Performance of the ritual prayer *[salāt]*, and payment of the alms-due *[zakāt]*, as in His words (Exalted is He):

They were commanded	*wa mā umirū illā*
only to serve Allāh,	*li-ya'budu 'llāha*
devoting the religion	*mukhlisīna*
to Him sincerely,	*la-hu 'd-dīn:*
as men of pure faith,	*ḥunafā'a*
and to perform the ritual prayer,	*wa yuqīmu 's-salāta*
and pay the alms-due.	*wa yu'tu 'z-zakāta*
That is the *dīn* of true worth.	*wa dhālika dīnu 'l-qayyima.*
(98:5)	

- The Resurrection *[Qiyāma]*, as in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Master of the Day of *Dīn*. (1:3)	*Māliki yaumi 'd-dīn.*

- The Sacred Law *[Sharī'a]*, as in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Today I have perfected	*al-yauma akmaltu*
your *dīn* for you.	*la-kum dīna-kum.*

—meaning: "the legal prescriptions of your religion *[sharā'i' dīni-kum]*."

Concerning the significance of the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Today I have perfected your religion for you. (5:3)
al-yauma akmaltu la-kum dīna-kum.

Implicit in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Today I have perfected	*al-yauma akmaltu*
your religion for you. (5:3)	*la-kum dīna-kum.*

—is a reference to the fact that, whereas Allāh (Exalted is He) sent down the Bible *[Kitāb]* as a single whole, He sent down the Criterion *[Furqān]*[359] in separate installments. If someone should ask: "Which is the better of the two, as a method of revelation *[nuzūl]*?" the answer to his question would be: "The Qur'ān is better, in view of what happened when Allāh (Exalted is He) sent down the Torah *[Taurāh]* as a single whole. The Children of Israel *[Banū Isrā'īl]* accepted it, but they put very little of it into practice. All those commandments and prohibitions, contained in the Torah *[Taurāh]*, were a very heavy burden for them to bear, so they said:

"We hear and we disobey." (2:93)	*sami'nā wa 'aṣainā.*

As for the Qur'ān, Allāh sent it down piece by piece, gradually and in separate installments. The first commandment Allāh enjoined upon the true believers *[mu'minīn]* was the affirmation:

There is no god but Allāh;	*lā ilāha illa 'llāh:*
Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh.	*Muhammadun Rasūlu 'llāh.*

—and He guaranteed them the Garden of Paradise, as soon as they pronounced it, so they heard and they obeyed *[sami'ū wa aṭā'ū]*.

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[359] "The Criterion *[Furqān]*" is often used as another name for the Qur'ān, on the basis of several verses *[āyāt]* in which it is mentioned, notably: 2:185 and 25:1.

Next, He commanded them to perform two ritual prayers *[salātain]*: two cycles of prayer *[rak'atain]* before the rising of the sun, and two cycles after its setting.

Next, He commanded them to perform the five [daily] ritual prayers *[amara-hum bi-ṣalāti 'l-khams]*.

Next, after the Migration to Medina *[Hijra]*, He commanded them to perform the Friday prayer *[Jum'a]* in congregation *[jamā'a]*.

Next, He commanded them to pay the alms-due *[zakāt]*.

Next, He commanded them to keep the fast *[saum]* of 'Āshūrā'.[360]

Next, He commanded them to devote three days to fasting *[ṣaum]* out of every month.

Next, He commanded them to devote the month of Ramaḍān to fasting *[ṣaum]*.

Next, He commanded them to engage in the Sacred Struggle *[Jihād]*.

Next, He commanded them to perform the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*.

Then, when the [revelation of all the] commandments and prohibitions had been completed, Allāh sent down to His Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), during the Farewell Pilgrimage *[Ḥajjat al-Wadā']*:

Today I have perfected	*al-yauma akmaltu*
your religion for you,	*la-kum dīna-kum*
and I have completed	*wa atmamtu*
My blessing upon you,	*'alai-kum ni'matī*
and I have approved Islām	*wa raḍītu*
for you as religion. (5:3)	*la-kumu 'l-islāma dīnā.*

This revelation came on Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, coinciding with the Day of 'Arafa, as we learn from the traditional report of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him). It was Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"A man of the Jews *[Yahūd]* came to 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) and told him: 'If a certain verse of revelation *[āya]*, which you recite, had been sent down to us, and we had recognized that day [to which it refers], we would surely have adopted it as a holy day *['īd]*.' 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) responded by asking him: 'Which verse *[āya]* do you mean?' The man said:

Today I have perfected	*al-yauma akmaltu*

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[360] See pp. 278–94 below.

your religion for you,	*la-kum dīna-kum*
and I have completed	*wa atmamtu*
My blessing upon you,	*ʿalai-kum niʿmatī*
and I have approved Islām	*wa raḍītu*
for you as religion. (5:3)	*la-kumu 'l-islāma dīnā.*

"ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) then told him: 'I know on which day it came down, and at which place it came down. It came down on the Day of ʿArafa, which coincided with Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jumʿa]*, while we were together with Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), performing the rite of Standing at ʿArafāt. Each of those two days—praise be to Allāh!—is a holy day *[ʿīd]* for us. This day will never cease to be a holy day *[ʿīd]* for the Muslims, as long as one of them survives.'

"Another man of the Jews *[Yahūd]* once said to Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father): 'If this day had been in our calendar, we would have adopted it as a holy day *[ʿīd]*.' Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) replied: 'And what holy day is more perfect than the Day of ʿArafa?'"

◆

Concerning the differences of opinion among the religious scholars as to why the Place of Standing *[al-Mawqif]* came to be called ʿArafāt, while the day spent standing there became known as [the Day of] ʿArafa.

In attempting to account for the significance of the fact that the Place of Standing *[al-Mawqif]* is called ʿArafāt, while the day spent standing there is known as [the Day of] ʿArafa, the religious scholars *[ʿulamāʾ]* have offered several different explanations. For instance, aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk has said:

"When Adam (peace be upon him) was cast down to the earth, he landed in India *[al-Hind]*, while Eve *[Ḥawwāʾ]* alighted at Jidda [on the western coast of Arabia]. Adam therefore set out in search of her, and she went searching for him. They eventually became reunited at ʿArafāt, on the Day of ʿArafa, and there they recognized each other *[taʿārafā]*. That explains why this day was called the Day of ʿArafa, and the place was named ʿArafāt."

To quote the explanation offered by as-Suddī: "The site was named ʿArafāt for no other reason than the following: Hagar *[Hājar]* became pregnant with Ishmael *[Ismāʿīl]*, so [when the child was born] she took him out of town, to get away from the presence of Sarah *[Sāra]*. Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) was absent at the time, so it was only when he came home, and saw no sign of Ishmael (peace be upon him), that Sarah told him what Hagar had done. He promptly set out in search of Ishmael, and eventually found him with Hagar at ʿArafāt. Since that was where he recognized him *[ʿarafa-hu]*, the place came to be known as ʿArafāt."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) set out on a journey that would take him beyond Palestine *[Filasṭīn]*, so Sarah made him swear that he would not

and as one who summons unto Allāh	*wa dā'iyan ila 'llāhi*
by His leave, and as a lamp	*bi-idhni-hi wa sirājan*
that sheds light. (33:45,46)	*munīrā*

—"and intercession *[shafā'a]* is conferred upon you. As for the granting of requests *[ijāba]* and the provision of right guidance *[hidāya]*, that is solely My responsibility." Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

Light upon light. Allāh guides	*nūrun 'alā nūr: yahdi 'llāhu*
to His light whom He will.	*li-nūri-hi man yashā':*
And Allāh speaks to mankind	*wa yaḍribu 'llāhu 'l-*
in allegories,	*amthāla li'n-nās:*
for Allāh is Knower of all things.	*wa 'llāhu bi-kulli shai'in 'Alīm.*
(24:35)	

—and He has said (Exalted is He):

And if We had so willed,	*wa law shi'nā*
We could have given every soul	*la-ātainā kulla nafsin*
its guidance,	*hudā-hā wa lākin*
but now My word is realized:	*ḥaqqa 'l-qaulu*
I shall indeed fill Hell with jinn	*min-nī la-amla'anna jahannama*
and human beings all together.	*mina 'l-jinnati wa 'n-nāsi ajma'īn.*
(32:13)	

3. The muezzin *[mu'adhdhin]* summons to the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and to the abode of the commandment of Allāh (Exalted is He). Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Who speaks better than one	*wa man aḥsanu qaulan*
who summons to Allāh	*mim-man da'ā ila 'llāhi*
and acts righteously? (41:33)	*wa 'amila ṣāliḥā.*

As reported on the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When the muezzins *[mu'adhdhinīn]* and those who declare their readiness to serve *[mulabbīn]* emerge from their graves, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*, the muezzin will give the call to prayer, and the *mulabbī* will declare his readiness to serve. Everything within range of the muezzin's voice will seek forgiveness on his behalf. Everything that hears the sound of his voice, everything moist and dry, such as trees and clay, will testify on his behalf. For the good deeds of every human being who prays *[ṣallā]* in that place of worship *[masjid]*, an equivalent amount will be recorded in the muezzin's credit column. In the space between the call to prayer *[adhān]* and the final announcement *[iqāma]* [immediately before the prayer], Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant him everything he asks for, whether it be the immediate enjoyment of some worldly benefit, or relief from something bad, or something to be kept in store for him in the hereafter.

sleeping!" He kept his vow by fasting every day for a week, then he mounted an ash-colored camel and rode to Mecca, where he arrived on the day of the Major Pilgrimage *[al-Ḥajj al-Akbar]*.[99] He had said: "I firmly intend to go [as a pilgrim] to the House of Allāh, and to ask Allāh for His help in dealing with you!" And so it came to pass. Having arrived in Mecca on the day of the Major Pilgrimage, he invoked a curse upon me. While clinging to the curtains draped over the Ka'ba, he said [in rhymed and metrical Arabic]:

""'O You to whom the pilgrims have come from afar,
hoping for the gracious favor of One who is Mighty, Single, Everlasting!

This Munāzil will not refrain from treating me abusively,
so exact what is due to me, O Merciful One, from my own son!

Paralyse one side of him, as a generous gift from You,
O You who are Most Holy, the One who was not begotten and does not beget!'"

"Munāzil went on to say: 'By the One who holds the heaven aloft and causes the water to flow, no sooner had my father uttered these words than my right side was stricken with paralysis! I was left lying around like a piece of discarded timber in the vicinity of the Sanctuary, and people kept coming to see me out of curiosity. They would tell one another: "This man's condition is due to his father's appeal, which Allāh accepted and put into effect."'

"The Commander of the Believers (may Allāh be well pleased with him) asked him: 'What did your father do next?'

"Munāzil replied: 'O Commander of the Believers, I begged him to invoke Allāh's blessing upon me, in the very same places where he had invoked the curse upon me. This was after he had come to regard me with approval, so he responded positively to my request. He installed me beside him on the back of a she-camel, and the beast kept going at a steady pace until we reached a dry river bed called Thornbush Valley *[Wādi 'l-Arāk]*. It was then that a startled bird flew out of a tree. The she-camel bolted and my father fell from her back. He died right there on the road.'

"'Alī then said (may Allāh be well pleased with him): 'Would you like me to teach you some prayers of supplication? I learned them from Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who told me: "Whenever these prayers are offered by someone who is sorely distressed,

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[99] The Major Pilgrimage *[al-Ḥajj al-Akbar]* is a more solemn occasion than the Lesser Pilgrimage or Visitation *['Umra]* (see note 41 on p. 26 above).

[ash'ara] the people, and let them know that it was sacred *[ḥaram]*, like all the other sacred localities, in case they should commit something unlawful there."

Others have said: "It came to be called [the Day of] *Tarwiyya* because of the dream that Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) experienced during the night thereof, in which he saw that he was going to sacrifice his son. When the morning came, he pondered *[tarawwā]* and reflected, asking himself whether it had come from the Enemy, Satan *[ash-Shaiṭān]*, or from the Friend, the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]*. He spent the rest of that day thinking about what he had seen, and then, when the Day of 'Arafa came around, he was told: 'You must do what you are commanded to do.' He recognized and understood *['arafa]* that it came from the Friend *[Ḥabīb]*, and this is how the Day of 'Arafa acquired its name."

As we learn from the report of Abū Ṣāliḥ, it was Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said: "The [Days of] *Tarwiyya* and 'Arafa came to be so called for the following reasons: It was on the night of [what is now called] *Tarwiyya* that Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) saw in his dream that he was being commanded to sacrifice his son. From waking up in the morning, he pondered *[rawwā]* the whole day long—that is to say, he reflected *[tafakkara]*—asking himself whether the dream had come from Allāh, or from Satan *[ash-Shaiṭān]*. Because of his pondering or reflection, the day was named *Tarwiyya*. Then, on the night of [what is now called] 'Arafa, he saw that dream a second time. When the morning arrived, he understood *['arafa]* that what he had seen was from Allāh (Glory be to Him and Exalted is He). That is why that day came to be called the Day of 'Arafa."

According to one of the scholars: "It was given that name because people acknowledge *[ya'tarifūna]* their sins on that day, at the Place of Standing *[Mawqif]*. The origin of this practice can be traced to the experience of Adam (peace be upon him), when he was commanded to perform the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, for he stood at 'Arafāt on the Day of 'Arafa, and said [speaking for Eve and himself]:

> 'Our Lord, we have wronged
> ourselves, and if You do not forgive us,
> and have mercy upon us,
> we shall surely be among the losers.'
> (7:23)"

> *Rabba-nā ẓalamnā anfusa-nā:*
> *wa in lam taghfir la-nā*
> *wa tarḥam-nā*
> *la-nakūnanna mina 'l-khāsirīn.*

The following explanations have also been put forward:

• ['Arafa] is derived from *'arf*, meaning that which is pleasantly fragrant *[tayyib]*. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

And He will admit them	*wa yudkhilu-humu 'l-*
to the Garden,	*jannata*
which He has made for them.	*'arrafa-hā la-hum.*
(47:6)	

—that is to say, He has made it pleasantly fragrant *[tayyaba-hā]* for them.

• ['Arafāt] is the opposite of Minā, because Minā is a place in which blood is shed *[yumnā]*, and that is why it is called Minā. Since it contains the droppings and clots of blood [from the sacrificial animals], it is not a pleasant place. 'Arafāt, on the other hand, is not contaminated by such dirt and squalor, and is therefore a pleasant place. That is precisely why it came to be called 'Arafāt, and why the day spent standing there is known as the Day of 'Arafa.

• ['Arafāt is so called] because people become acquainted with one another *[yatārafūna]* [during the rite of standing] there.

• These two names ['Arafa and 'Arafāt] have their root in the concept of patience *[ṣabr]*. When a man is said to be *'ārif*, it means that he is patient *[ṣābir]*, self-effacing and humble. In the words of the proverbial saying *[mathal]*: "The soul is very patient *[an-nafs 'arūf]*, and it will bear whatever it has to bear." [The famous poet] Dhu'r-Rumma described someone as being:

Long-suffering indeed, when destiny's decrees befell him
['arūfun lammā haṭṭat 'alai-hi 'l-maqādiru].

That is to say, he was extremely patient *[ṣabūr]* in enduring the verdict of Allāh.

According to this last explanation, therefore, the name ['Arafa/'Arafāt] has come to be used in recognition of the modest humility of the Pilgrims *[Ḥujjāj]*, their self-effacement, their patience in supplication *[du'ā']* and in the face of all kinds of tribulation *[balā']*, and their endurance of extreme hardships and difficulties, in order to perform this worshipful service *['ibāda]*.

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Concerning the noble dignity of the Day of 'Arafa, and of its Night.

Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt ['Father of Blessings'] Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has informed us, after listing the authorities by whom the report was transmitted,[364] that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> There is no day more excellent than the Day of 'Arafa, on which Allāh (Exalted is He) invites the inhabitants of heaven to vie in glory with the people of the earth, saying: "Look at My servants! See how they come to Me, disheveled and thick with dust, from every deep ravine *[min kulli fajjin 'amīq]*.[365] They are hoping for My mercy, and afraid of incurring My chastisement, for no day ever witnessed more emancipation from the Fire of Hell than the Day of 'Arafa.

As we are informed by Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak, on good traditional authority,[366] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) delivered a sermon to the people on the Day of 'Arafa, in which he said:

> O people, true piety *[birr]* does not reside in urging your camels to run fast, nor in spurring your horses to the gallop. It is rather a matter of traveling gracefully, so you must relate kindly to anyone who is weak, and you must not give offense to any fellow Muslim.

As reported by Nāfi', Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) told him that he once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

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[364] **Author's note:** Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **Abū 'Alī al-Hasan ibn Ahmad—'Alī ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abdi'llāh al-Mu'addil—Abū 'Alī ibn as-Sawwāf [the Wool Merchant]—'Abdu'llāh ibn Muhammad ibn Nājiya—'Umar ibn Hafs Abū 'Amr—Muhammad ibn Marwān—Hishām ad-Dastawā'ī—Abu'z-Zubair—Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)**—the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[365] This expression occurs in the verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān (22:27) quoted on p. 199 above.

[366] **Author's note:** Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **Abū Muhammad al-Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Fārisī [the Persian]—al-Hasan al-'Arabī—Ibn 'Abbās** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)**—the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

> Allāh (Exalted is He) inspects His servants on the Day of 'Arafa, and if there is an atom's weight of faith *[īmān]* in the heart of any one of them, He grants him forgiveness, without fail.

Nāfi' said: "So I asked Ibn 'Umar: 'Does that apply to the people in general, or only to those who are present [as Pilgrims] on the Day of 'Arafa?' He replied: 'Not only to the latter, but to the people in general.'"

As we are also informed by Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak, likewise on good traditional authority,[367] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> When the Day of 'Arafa comes around, Allāh (Exalted is He) will descend to the heaven of this world. Inviting the angels to regard the Pilgrim *[Hājj]* as a shining example, He will say to them (Almighty and Glorious is He): "O My angels, look at My servants! See how they come to Me from every deep ravine *[min kulli fajjin 'amīq]*, disheveled and thick with dust. They are hoping for My mercy, and afraid of incurring My chastisement, for it is incumbent on one who is visited to honor his visitor, and it is incumbent on the host to honor his guest. Bear witness that I have granted them forgiveness, and that I have appointed admission to the Garden of Paradise as their hospitable reception."
>
> The angels will say: "O Lord, included amongst them is that man, So-and-so *[Fulān]*, who gives himself airs, as well as that woman, So-and-so *[Fulāna]*, who gives herself airs!" But Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will respond to this by saying: "I have nevertheless forgiven them, for no day is more abundantly blessed, with emancipation from the Fire of Hell, than the Day of 'Arafa."

According to another traditional report, also conveyed to us by Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak,[368] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> With only one exception, Iblīs has never seen a day on which he was smaller, more despicable, more insignificant, and more exasperated, than on the Day of 'Arafa. That is because he witnesses the sending down of so much merciful compassion, and so much pardoning of sins. The only exception was what he saw on the Day [of the Battle] of Badr.

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[367] **Author's note**. Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **Mukābir ibn al-Jahsh al-Māzinī** (in al-Basra)—**Abu'z-Zubair**—**Jābir** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[368] **Author's note**. This report has also been conveyed to us by Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who cites a chain of transmission *[isnād]* going back to: **Ṭalha ibn 'Abdi'llāh** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).**

"O Messenger of Allāh," his listeners asked, "what did he see on the Day of Badr?" He replied:

> Why, he saw Gabriel summoning the angels!

As reported by 'Ikrima, Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) used to say: "The greatest day of the Pilgrimage *[Hajj]* is the Day of 'Arafa, which is also the Day of Competition in Glory *[Yaum al-Mubāhāt]*. Allāh (Exalted is He) descends to the heaven of this world, and He says to the angels: 'Look at My servants there on My earth! See how they have believed *[saddaqū]* in Me!' No day is more abundantly blessed, with emancipation from the Fire of Hell, than the Day of 'Arafa."

According to Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The promised day *[al-yaum al-mau'ūd]* is the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*. The day that bears witness *[shāhid]* is Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, and that which is witnessed *[mashhūd]* [by the angels] is the Day of 'Arafa.

According to 'Atā', it was Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who reported that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On the Day of 'Arafa, Allāh (Exalted is He) has invited angelic emulation of the human race *[bāhā bi'n-nās]* in general, and He has invited angelic emulation of 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb in particular.

According to Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Surely no person can be guilty of a more heinous offense, than one who comes to realize, on leaving 'Arafāt, that Allāh has not granted him forgiveness.

Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "Allāh (Exalted is He) grants forgiveness, on the evening of the Day of 'Arafa, to all the people present at the assembly, except those who are guilty of major sins *[kabā'ir]*. Then, when the morning of al-Muzdalifa[369] comes around, He also forgives those who are bearing the burden of major sins and unsettled liabilities *[tabi'āt]*."

Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak has also informed

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[369] See note 363 on p. 213 above.

The Eighth Discourse

Concerning the special qualities of the Ten Days *[Ayyām al-ʿAshr]*.[318]

Let us first of all consider the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

By the dawn,	*wa 'l-fajri*
and ten nights,	*wa layālin ʿashr:*
and the even and the Odd,	*wa 'sh-shafʿi wa 'l-Watr:*
and the night when it travels!	*wa 'l-laili idhā yasr:*
Is there, in that, an oath	*hal fī dhālika qasamun*
for thinking man! (89:1–5)[319]	*li-dhī ḥijr.*

As for His saying:

By the dawn...	*wa 'l-fajri* ...

—that is something about which people have held various opinions. According to Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

- What is meant here by "the dawn *[al-fajr]*" is the ritual prayer of daybreak *[ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ]*.
- The expression "and ten nights *[wa layālin ʿashr]*" refers to the ten [special nights at the beginning] of [the month of] Dhu 'l-Ḥijja, while "the even *[ash-shafʿ]*" is the creation *[khalq]* and "the Odd *[al-Watr]*" is Allāh.

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[318] A more strictly literal translation of *Ayyām al-ʿAshr* would be "The Days of the Ten [Nights]," meaning the days corresponding to those nights. As Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) explains in this Discourse, there is some disagreement among the traditional authorities, as to which days of which month are properly referred to as *Ayyām al-ʿAshr*. The prevailing opinion, however, is that the expression applies to the [first] ten days of Dhu 'l-Hijja, the month of the Pilgrimage.

[319] In this Discourse, and particularly in this first subsection, the translation of Qurʾānic verses *[āyāt]* has been adapted to suit the context in which they are quoted, in relation to various commentaries and interpretations. Without such adaptation, many passages would hardly be intelligible. The task can be extremely difficult, however, since the discussion often hinges on fine points of Arabic word formation, or on subtleties of Arabic grammar and syntax.

cycle *[rak'a]* of the *witr* prayer, the recommended Qur'ānic recitation is the Sūra of the Most High *[Sūrat al-A'lā]*, which reads:

Glorify the Name of your Lord	*sabbiḥi 'sma Rabbi-ka 'l-A'lā:*
the Most High who created,	*alladhī khalaqa fa-sawwā:*
and then shaped, and who	*wa 'lladhī*
determined, then guided;	*qaddara fa-hadā*
and who brought forth	*wa 'lladhī akhraja 'l-mar'ā:*
the pasturage, then turned it	*fa-ja'ala-hu*
into rust-colored stubble.	*ghuthā'an aḥwā.*

We shall make you recite	*sa-nuqri'u-ka*
[O Muhammad]	
so that you shall not forget	*fa-lā tansā*
save that which Allāh wills.	*illā mā shā'a 'llāh:*
He surely knows what is spoken aloud	*inna-hu ya'lamu 'l-jahra*
and that which is kept hidden;	*wa mā yakhfā.*
and We shall ease your way	*wa nuyassiru-ka*
unto the state of ease.	*li'l-yusrā.*

Therefore remind,	*fa-dhakkir*
in case the reminder brings	*in nafa'ati*
some benefit.	*'dh-dhikrā*
He who fears will remember,	*sa-yadhdhakkaru man yakhshā*
but the most wretched will flout it,	*wa yatajannabu-ha 'l-ashqā*
he who will roast in the Great Fire,	*alladhī yaṣla 'n-nāra 'l-kubrā*
in which he then will neither die	*thumma lā yamūtu*
nor live.	*fī-hā wa lā yaḥyā.*

Successful is he who purifies himself,	*qad aflaḥa man tazakkā*
and remembers the Name of his Lord,	*wa dhakara 'sma Rabbi-hi*
and then performs the prayer.	*fa-ṣallā.*
But you prefer the life of this	*bal tu'thirūna 'l-ḥayāta*
lower world,	*'d-dunyā*
although the Hereafter is better	*wa 'l-ākhiratu khairun*
and more lasting.	*wa abqā*

Surely this is in the ancient scrolls:	*inna hādhā la-fi 's-Suḥufi 'l-ūlā*
the scrolls of Abraham and Moses.	*Ṣuḥufi Ibrāhīma wa Mūsā.*
(87:1–19)	

In the second cycle *[rak'a]* of the *witr* prayer, the recommended Qur'ānic recitation is the Sūra called "the Unbelievers" *[Sūrat al-Kāfirūn]*, which reads:

Say: "O unbelievers,	*qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn.*
I do not worship what you worship,	*lā a'budu mā ta'budūn.*
and you are not worshipping	*wa lā antum 'ābidūna*
that which I worship;	*mā a'bud:*

"They said: 'Yes indeed *[balā]*, O Messenger of Allāh!' He then went on to say: 'When this evening comes around, Allāh descends to the heaven of this world, then He gives the order to His angels, and they promptly alight upon the earth. If a needle were to be dropped, it would have nowhere else to fall, except on the head of an angel. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will say: 'O My angels, look at My servants! See how they have come to Me, disheveled and thick with dust, from all quarters of the land. Do you hear what they are asking?' They angels will say: 'O our Lord, they are asking for forgiveness.' He will then say (Glory be to Him and Exalted is He): 'I call you to bear witness that I have forgiven them, three times. So let them pour forth from their Place of Standing *[Mawqif]*, in a state of having been forgiven.'"

Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Your Lord creates and chooses what He wills. (28:68)
wa Rabbuka yakhluqu mā yashā'u wa yakhtār.

Thus Allāh (Exalted is He) has selected four out of each kind of thing, then He has chosen one of the four:

From among the Angels, He selected Gabriel *[Jibrīl]*, Michael *[Mīkā'īl]*, Isrāfīl and 'Azrā'īl, then He chose Gabriel from these four.

From all the Prophets (peace be upon them), the four He selected were Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (Allāh bless them all, and give them peace), then of these He chose Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

The four He selected from among the Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them) were Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī, and His preferred choice was Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

The four mosques: The Sanctuary Mosque [by the Ka'ba in Mecca], al-Aqṣā Mosque [in Jerusalem], the Mosque of Medina the Ennobled City, and the Mosque of Mount Sinai. Of these He chose the Sanctuary Mosque *[al-Masjid al-Ḥarām]*.

The four days: The Day of Breaking Fast *[Yaum al-Fiṭr]*, the Day of Sacrifice *[Yaum al-Aḍḥā]*,[108] the Day of 'Arafa,[109] and the Day of 'Āshūrā'.[110] Of these He then chose the Day of 'Arafa.

The four nights: The Night of Absolution *[Lailat al-Barā'a]*,[111] the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*, the Night of Friday Congregation *[Lailat al-Jum'a]*,[112] and the Night of the Festival *[Lailat al-'Īd]*. Of these He chose the Night of Power.

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[108] The Day of Sacrifice *[Yaum al-Aḍḥā]* is the tenth day of Dhu'l-Hijja, the month of Pilgrimage.

[109] The Day of 'Arafa *[Yaum 'Arafa]* is the ninth day of Dhu'l-Hijja, the month of Pilgrimage.

[110] The Day of 'Āshūrā' *[Yaum 'Āshūrā']* is the tenth day of Muharram, which is the first month of the year in the Islamic calendar. See pp. 278–94 below.

[111] The Night of Absolution *[Lailat al-Barā'a]* is discussed on pp. 60–68 below.

[112] The Day of Congregational Prayer *[al-Jum'a]* is Friday—but please remember that Friday night in the Islamic calendar is the night that begins at sunset on Thursday!

sleeping!” He kept his vow by fasting every day for a week, then he mounted an ash-colored camel and rode to Mecca, where he arrived on the day of the Major Pilgrimage *[al-Ḥajj al-Akbar]*.[99] He had said: “I firmly intend to go [as a pilgrim] to the House of Allāh, and to ask Allāh for His help in dealing with you!” And so it came to pass. Having arrived in Mecca on the day of the Major Pilgrimage, he invoked a curse upon me. While clinging to the curtains draped over the Kaʿba, he said [in rhymed and metrical Arabic]:

“‘“O You to whom the pilgrims have come from afar,
hoping for the gracious favor of One who is Mighty, Single, Everlasting!

This Munāzil will not refrain from treating me abusively,
so exact what is due to me, O Merciful One, from my own son!

Paralyse one side of him, as a generous gift from You,
O You who are Most Holy, the One who was not begotten and does not beget!”’

“Munāzil went on to say: ‘By the One who holds the heaven aloft and causes the water to flow, no sooner had my father uttered these words than my right side was stricken with paralysis! I was left lying around like a piece of discarded timber in the vicinity of the Sanctuary, and people kept coming to see me out of curiosity. They would tell one another: “This man’s condition is due to his father’s appeal, which Allāh accepted and put into effect.”’

“The Commander of the Believers (may Allāh be well pleased with him) asked him: ‘What did your father do next?’

“Munāzil replied: ‘O Commander of the Believers, I begged him to invoke Allāh’s blessing upon me, in the very same places where he had invoked the curse upon me. This was after he had come to regard me with approval, so he responded positively to my request. He installed me beside him on the back of a she-camel, and the beast kept going at a steady pace until we reached a dry river bed called Thornbush Valley *[Wādi ’l-Arāk]*. It was then that a startled bird flew out of a tree. The she-camel bolted and my father fell from her back. He died right there on the road.’

“ʿAli then said (may Allāh be well pleased with him): ‘Would you like me to teach you some prayers of supplication? I learned them from Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who told me: “Whenever these prayers are offered by someone who is sorely distressed,

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[99] The Major Pilgrimage *[al-Ḥajj al-Akbar]* is a more solemn occasion than the Lesser Pilgrimage or Visitation *[ʿUmra]* (see note 41 on p. 26 above).

• Say: "O unbelievers…." (109:1)	*qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn.*

—three times, and [the Sūra that begins with]:

• Say: "He is Allāh, One!" (112:1)	*qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad.*

—one time only, beginning each time with:

In the Name of Allāh,	*Bismi'llāhi 'r-*
the All-Merciful,	*Raḥmāni 'r-*
the All-Compassionate.	*Raḥīm.*

—Allāh (Exalted is He) will surely say [to the angels]: "Bear witness that I have granted him forgiveness for his sins."

As for the invocations *[da'awāt]*, Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak has informed us of this report,[576] narrated by 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Umar al-Laithī, who heard it from his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

"We have been told that Allāh (Exalted is He) presented Jesus *['Īsā]* (peace be upon him) with five invocations *[da'awāt]*. Gabriel *[Jibrīl]* (peace be upon him) brought them to Jesus *['Īsā]* (peace be upon him), and said: 'Invoke [the blessing of the Lord] by means of these invocations *[da'awāt]*, for no form of worshipful service *['ibāda]* is dearer to Allāh (Exalted is He) than the worship performed on the Day of 'Arafa:

- The first of them is:

There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu*
Alone, without partner.	*Waḥda-hu lā sharīka la-h:*
To Him belongs the sovereignty	*la-hu 'l-mulku*
and to Him belongs the praise.	*wa la-hu 'l-ḥamd:*
He brings to life and causes death.	*yuḥyī wa yumīt:*
All goodness is in His Hand,	*bi-yadihi 'l-khairu*
and He is Capable of all things.	*wa Huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*

- The second is:

I bear witness that	*ashhadu an lā ilāha*
there is no god but Allāh,	*illa 'llāhu*
Alone, without partner,	*Waḥda-h: lā sharīka la-h:*
[and that He is] One God,	*Ilāhan Wāḥidan*
Everlasting, who has taken	*Ṣamadā:*
unto Himself neither	*lam yattakhidh*
female companion nor son.	*ṣāḥibatan wa lā waladā.*

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[576] **Author's note:** Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: al-Qāḍī [the Judge] ash-Sharīf Abu'l-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Muhtadī bi'llāh—Abu'l-Fatḥ Yūsuf ibn 'Umar ibn Masrūr al-Qawwās—'Abdu'llāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Thābit al-Bazzāz—Ayyūb (Ibn Walīd ad-Ḍarīr)—Abu'n-Naṣr (al-Hāshim ibn al-Qāsim)—Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl ibn 'Aṭiyya—his father—'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Umar al-Laithī—his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

- The third is:

There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu*
Alone, without partner.	*Waḥda-hu lā sharīka la-h:*
To Him belongs the sovereignty	*la-hu 'l-mulku*
and to Him belongs the praise.	*wa la-hu 'l-ḥamd:*
He brings to life and causes death,	*yuḥyī wa yumītu*
while He is Ever-Living and never dies.	*wa Huwa Ḥayyun lā yamūt:*
All goodness is in His Hand,	*bi-yadihi 'l-khairu*
and He is Capable of all things.	*wa Huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*

- The fourth is:

Allāh is enough for me, and He suffices.	*ḥasbiya 'llāhu wa kafā.*
Allāh hears those	*sami'a 'llāh*
who call in supplication.	*li-man da'ā.*
There is no final goal beyond Allāh.	*laisa warā'a 'llāhi muntahā.*

- The fifth is:

O Allāh, to You belongs the praise,	*Allāhumma la-ka 'l-ḥamdu*
as You say,	*ka-mā taqūl:*
and even better than You say.	*wa khairan mimmā taqūl:*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
to You belong my ritual prayer	*la-ka ṣalātī*
and my rites [of Pilgrimage],	*wa nusukī*
and my living and my dying,	*wa maḥyāya wa mamātī*
and to You, O my Lord,	*wa la-ka yā Rabbi*
belongs my legacy.	*turāthī*
O Allāh, I take refuge with You	*Allāhumma a'ūdhu bi-ka*
from the torment of the grave,	*min 'adhābi 'l-qabri*
and from disorder in the state of affairs.	*wa min shatāti 'l-amr.*
O Allāh, I ask You for the best	*Allāhumma as'alu-ka*
that is blown along by the wind.	*khaira mā tajrī bi-hi 'r-rīḥ.*

"The Disciples *[Ḥawāriyyūn]*[377] asked Mary's son Jesus *['Īsā 'bnu Maryam]* (peace be upon him): 'To what spiritual reward is a person entitled, if he invokes [the blessing of the Lord] by means of these invocations *[da'awāt]*?' This is the answer he gave them: "'As for the person who pronounces the first, a hundred times, not one of people of the earth will be credited with the equivalent of that deed, on that Day [of 'Arafa], and on the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*. Of all the servants [of the Lord], he will be the one with the most good deeds.

"As for the person who pronounces the second, a hundred times, Allāh will record a million good deeds in his favor, and He will erase an equal number of bad deeds from his debit column. He will also promote him by ten thousand degrees in the Garden of Paradise.

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[377] See note 306 on p. 154 above.

"As for the person who pronounces the third, a hundred times, seventy thousand angels will descend from the heaven of this world, raising their hands as they invoke blessings upon him who pronounced it.

"As for the person who pronounces the fourth, a hundred times, an angel will receive it, and deposit it in the presence the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]* (Almighty and Glorious is He), who will look upon him who pronounced it—and when Allāh (Exalted is He) looks upon someone, he will not suffer misfortune.'

"They said: 'O Jesus, so what is the spiritual reward of someone who pronounces the fifth invocation?' To this he replied: 'That is my own invocation, and I am not permitted to comment on it.'"

According to another traditional report, also conveyed to us by Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak,[178] it was 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "As for the invocation most frequently offered by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), on the evening of [the Day of] 'Arafa, he used to say:

O Allāh, to You belongs the praise,	*Allāhumma la-ka 'l-ḥamdu*
as You say,	*ka-mā taqūl:*
and even better than You say.	*wa khairan mimmā taqūl:*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
to You belong my ritual prayer	*la-ka ṣalātī*
and my rites [of Pilgrimage],	*wa nusukī*
and my living and my dying,	*wa maḥyāya wa mamātī*
and to You, O my Lord,	*wa la-ka yā Rabbi*
belongs my legacy.	*turāthī*
O Allāh, I take refuge with You	*Allāhumma a'ūdhu bi-ka*
from the torment of the grave,	*min 'adhābi 'l-qabri*
and the temptation of the breast,	*wa fitnati 'ṣ-ṣadri*
and disorder in the state of affairs.	*wa shatāti 'l-amr*
O Allāh, I ask You for some of the best	*Allāhumma as'alu-ka min*
that is blown along by the wind.	*khairi mā tajrī bi-hi 'r-rīḥ.*

As we are informed by Shaikh Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak, on good traditional authority,[179] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

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[178] **Author's note.** Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh al-Muqri [the Qur'ān-teacher]—Khalīfa ibn al-Ḥusain—'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him).**

[179] **Author's note.** Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **Mūsā ibn 'Ubāda ibn 'Abdi'llāh al-Muqri [the Qur'ān-teacher]—'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

This is the invocation *[du'ā']* most often uttered by me, and by the Prophets *[Anbiyā']* before me, at 'Arafa:

There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu*
Alone, without partner.	*Waḥda-hu lā sharīka la-h:*
To Him belongs the sovereignty	*la-hu 'l-mulku*
and to Him belongs the praise	*wa la-hu 'l-ḥamd:*
All goodness is in His Hand,	*bi-yadihi 'l-khairu*
and He is Capable of all things.	*wa Huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*
O Allāh, set a light in my heart,	*Allāhumma 'j'al fī qalbī nūran*
and a light in my hearing,	*wa fī sam'ī nūran*
and a light in my eyes.	*wa fī baṣarī nūrā.*
O Allāh, expand for me my breast,	*Allāhumma 'shraḥ lī ṣadrī*
and make my business easy for me.	*wa yassir lī amrī*
O Allāh, I take refuge with You	*Allāhumma a'ūdhu bi-ka*
from the torment of the grave,	*min 'adhābi 'l-qabri*
and the temptation of the breast,	*wa fitnati 'ṣ-ṣadri*
and disorder in the state of affairs.	*wa shatāti 'l-amr.*
O Allāh, I take refuge with You	*Allāhumma a'ūdhu bi-ka*
from the evil of that	*min sharri mā*
which slips in by night,	*yaliju fi'l-laili*
from the evil of that	*wa min sharri mā*
which slips in by day,	*yaliju fi'n-nahāri*
from the evil of that	*wa min sharri mā*
which is blown by the winds,	*tahubbu bi-hi 'r-riyāḥu*
and from the evil	*wa min sharri*
of the calamities of time.	*bawā'iqi 'd-dahr.*

As reported by aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said, during the Farewell Pilgrimage *[Ḥajjat al-Wadā']*, when they were all assembled at 'Arafa:

This is the greatest day of the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*. There is no Pilgrimage for anyone who is not present at 'Arafa, to observe both the Day and the Night thereof. This day is for invoking the Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), and putting requests to Him. It is the day of *tahlīl* [proclaiming His Uniqueness], of *takbīr* [declaring His Supreme Greatness, and of *talbiya* [affirming one's readiness to be of service to Him]. If someone is present to observe this Day, in this place, yet refrains from putting any request to his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), that person is the one deprived. You offer your supplications to One who is All-Generous *[Jawād]*, who does not give grudgingly, to One who is Ever-Gentle *[Ḥalīm]*, who does not act stupidly, and to One who is All-Knowing *['Alīm]*, who does not forget. If someone fasts on the Day of 'Arafa, while at home with his family, he has effectively fasted for one year in front of him, and one year behind him.

The Tenth Discourse

Concerning the special qualities of the Day of Sacrifice *[Yawm al-Aḍḥā]* and the Day of Immolation *[Yawm al-Naḥr].*

To explain the meaning of the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Surely We have given you Abundance;	*innā a'ṭainā-ka 'l-Kauthar:*
so pray to your Lord and sacrifice.	*fa ṣalli li-Rabbi-ka wa 'nḥar:*
The one who hates you,	*inna shāni'a-ka*
he is the one cut off. (108:1–3)	*huwa 'l-abtar.*

—'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) provided the following interpretation:

"'Abundance *[al-Kauthar]*' means 'much goodness *[al-khair al-kathīr]*.' It refers to the Qur'ān and Prophethood *[Nubuwwa]*, as well as to the river of that name, which exists in the Garden of Paradise. As a river that flows from the center of the Garden, its inner channel consists of hollowed pearls, while on its two banks there are domes of green corundum *[yāqūt akhḍar]*. Its water is sweeter than honey, and smoother than butter. Its mud is highly scented musk, while its soil is white camphor, and its pebbles are pearls and sapphires. It flows at a rapid pace, like that of arrows in flight. Allāh (Exalted is He) has given it to His Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace)."

It was Muqātil (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "The expression:

Surely We have given you Abundance.	*innā a'ṭainā-ka 'l-Kauthar.*

—refers to a river that flows in the center of the Garden of Paradise. It is called *al-Kauthar* for the simple reason that, of all the rivers of the Garden of Paradise, it is the most abundant in goodness *[akthar khairan]*.

That river is a swirling stream, which flows at a rapid pace, like an arrow in flight. Its clay consists of highly scented musk, while its gravel consists of sapphires, chrysolite, and pearls that are whiter than snow, smoother than butter, and sweeter than honey. Its banks are domes of hollowed pearls. Every dome is a league in breadth by a league in height, and on it there are four thousand panels of gold. Inside every dome there is a bride, one of the houries with those lovely eyes *[al-hūr al-'īn]*, attended by seventy servants. For, as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> "'On the night of my Heavenly Journey *[Isrā']*, I said to Gabriel *[Jibrīl]*: "What are these pavilions?" Gabriel (peace be upon him) replied: "These are the dwellings of your wives in the Garden of Paradise."'"

"Four streams branch off from *al-Kauthar*, to supply the inhabitants of the Gardens of Paradise, as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has mentioned in the Sūra of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).[380] One of them consists of water, the second of milk, the third of wine, and the fourth of honey."

Concerning the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

So pray to your Lord and sacrifice.	*fa salli li-Rabbi-ka wa 'nhar.*

—Muqātil (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) said: "This means: 'Perform the five [daily] ritual prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]* for the sake of your Lord, and sacrifice the animal body on the Day of Immolation *[Yaum an-Naḥr]*.'

Other interpretations include the following:

- "So pray to your Lord *[fa salli li-Rabbi-ka]*" means: "Perform the ritual prayer of the Festival *[ṣalāt al-'Īd]*," while "and sacrifice *[wa 'nḥar]*" means: "Sacrifice the body [of the animal] at Minā."
- [The whole sentence means:] "Raise your hand toward the throat of your sacrificial offering, while uttering the affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*."
- "And sacrifice *[wa 'nhar]*" means: "Turn toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba] with your sacrificial offering."

As for the statement of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The one who hates you, he is the one cut off. (108:3)	*inna shāni'a-ka* *huwa 'l-abtar.*

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[380] The Sūra of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is the 47th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

—this refers to the following incident: The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once entered the Sacred Mosque *[al-Masjid al-Ḥarām]* by the Gate of Banī Sahm ibn 'Amr ibn Ḥaṣīṣ. The people of Quraish were sitting in the Mosque, so the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) passed straight through, without sitting down, and made his exit by the Gate of aṣ-Ṣafā. They looked at him as he went out, though they had not noticed him when he entered, so they did not recognize him. At the Gate of of aṣ-Ṣafā, he was met by al-'Āṣ ibn Wā'il ibn Hishām ibn Sa'īd ibn Sa'd ibn Sahm, who was on his way in as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was coming out.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had recently suffered the loss of his son, 'Abdu'llāh ibn Muhammad. In those days, when a man died without leaving a son to inherit from him, people would refer to him as "the one cut off *[al-abtar]*." So, when al-'Āṣ ibn Wā'il finally joined the people inside, they asked him: "Who was it that you met on your way in?" and he told them: "The one cut off *[al-abtar]*." In the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The one who hates you,	*inna shāni'a-ka*
he is the one cut off. (108:3)	*huwa 'l-abtar.*

—which were thereupon sent down, "the one who hates you *[shāni'a-ka]*" means: "your enemy, and your detester," while "he is the one cut off *[huwa 'l-abtar]*" means: "Cut off from all that is good is al-'Āṣ ibn Wā'il. As for you, O Muhammad, you will be remembered in My presence, whenever you remember Me." Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) then exalted his renown *[dhikr]* among the people at large. Allāh (Exalted is He) said to him:

Did We not cause	*a-lam nashraḥ*
your breast to expand for you,	*la-ka ṣadra-k:*
and relieve you of your burden,	*wa waḍa'nā 'an-ka wizra-k:*
that weighed down your back?	*alladhī anqaḍa ẓahra-k:*
Did We not exalt your fame?	*wa rafa'nā la-ka dhikra-k.*
(94:1–4)	

Yes indeed, for he is remembered and mentioned by name (Allāh bless him and give him peace) on every Day of Festival *['Īd]* and Congregation *[Jum'a]*, in the pulpits *[manābir]* and the mosques *[masājid]*, in the call to prayer *[adhān]*, the announcement that prayer is about to begin *[iqāma]*, and the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* itself, and on all important occasions, including the marriage sermon *[khutbat an-nikāh]* and other public speeches, as well as in special times of need. Allāh bless him and give him peace! Allāh appointed the highest Paradise *[Firdaus]* to be his resting place, and the words of his hater and his enemy did him no harm. As for al-ʿĀs ibn Wā'il, Allāh appointed the Fire of Hell to be his resting place, along with all kinds of torment and agony, for saying what he said to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and for his disbelief *[kufr]* in Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

By the same token, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will recompense all those who love the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), among the believing members *[mu'minīn]* of his Community *[Umma]*, by granting them the Garden of Paradise, and He will recompense all those who hate him, among the hypocrites *[munāfiqīn]* and unbelievers *[kuffār]*, by condemning them to the Fire of Hell.

❦

Concerning the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

So pray to your Lord and sacrifice.
fa ṣalli li-Rabbi-ka wa 'nḥar. **(108:2)**

You must know that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) commanded his Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and his Community *[Umma]* to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. Then He commanded them to practice certain things in second place, after the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. Remembrance *[dhikr]* is one of these, supplication *[du'ā']* is another, and immolation *[naḥr]* [the slaughtering of sacrificial animals] is yet another.

Concerning the remembrance *[dhikr]* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

As for the practice of remembrance *[dhikr]*, this is mentioned in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

O you who believe,	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna*
remember Allāh with	*āmanu 'dhkuru 'llāha*
frequent remembrance,	*dhikran kathīrā:*
and glorify Him at the dawn	*wa sabbiḥū-hu bukratan*
and in the evening. (33:41,42)	*wa aṣīlā.*

—and in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

So remember Me,	*fa-'dhkurū-nī*
and I will remember you.	*adhkur-kum*
Be thankful to Me,	*wa 'shkurū lī*
and be not ungrateful toward Me.	*wa lā takfurūn.*
(2:152)	

The religious scholars *['ulamā']* have offered various interpretations of the expression: "So remember Me, and I will remember you *[fa-'dhkurū-nī adhkur-kum]*." For instance, Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "It must mean: 'Remember Me through obedience to Me *[ṭā'atī]*, and I will remember you through My supportive assistance *[ma'ūnatī]*,' for, as Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

As for those who strive in Our cause,	*wa 'lladhīna jāhadū fī-nā*
We surely guide them in Our ways.	*la-nahdiyanna-hum subula-nā.*
(29:69)"	

It was Sa'īd ibn Jubair (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "It must mean: 'Remember Me through obedience to Me *[ṭā'atī]*, and I will remember you through My forgiveness *[maghfiratī]*,' for, as Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

And obey Allāh and the Messenger,	*wa atī'u 'llāha wa 'r-rasūla*
for then you may be treated mercifully.	*la'alla-kum turḥamūn.*
(3:132)"	

According to Fudail ibn 'Iyād (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "It must mean: 'So remember Me through obedience to Me *[tā'atī]*, and I will remember you through My spiritual reward *[thawābī]*,' for, as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

As for those who believe	*inna 'lladhīna āmanū*
and do good works,	*wa 'amilu 'ṣ-ṣāliḥāti innā*
We do not leave to waste the reward	*lā nuḍī'u ajra*
of one who does good works.	*man aḥsana 'amalā*
As for them, theirs will be Gardens	*ulā'ika la-hum jannātu*
of Eden, beneath which rivers flow,	*'Adnin tajrī min taḥti-himu 'l-*
they will be adorned therein	*anhāru yuḥallawna fī-hā*
with bracelets of gold, and	*min asāwira min dhahabin*
they will be robed in green garments	*wa yalbasūna thiyāban khuḍran*
of silk and brocade,	*min sundusin wa istabraqin*
reclining on couches therein.	*muttaki'īna fī-hā 'ala 'l-arā'ik:*
How splendid the reward,	*ni'ma 'th-thawāb:*
and how fine a resting-place!	*wa ḥasunat murtafaqā.*
(18:30,31)"	

The Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone obeys Allāh, he has thereby remembered Allāh, even if he does relatively little in the way of ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, fasting, and recitation of the Qur'ān. If someone disobeys Allāh, on the other hand, he has thereby forgotten Allāh, however much he may do in the way of ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, fasting, and recitation of the Qur'ān.

It was Abū Bakr as-Ṣiddīq [the Champion of Truth] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said that it means: "The affirmation of My Oneness *[tawḥīd]* is sufficient as an act of worshipful service *['ibāda]*, and the Garden of Paradise is sufficient as a spiritual reward *[thawāb]*."

According to Ibn Kaisān (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "It must mean: 'So remember Me through thankfulness *[shukr]*, and I will remember you through extra generosity *[ziyāda]*,' for, in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

If you are thankful,	*la-in shakartum*
I will surely give you more;	*la-azīdanna-kum*
but if you are ungrateful,	*wa la-in kafartum*
My punishment is terrible indeed.	*inna 'adhābī la-shadīd.*
(14:7)"	

The following interpretations have also been put forward:

- "It must mean: 'So remember Me through the affirmation of My Oneness *[tawḥīd]*, and through true belief *[īmān]*, and I will remember you through promotion to the ascending degrees *[darajāt]* and the Gardens of Paradise,' on account of His words (Exalted is He):

And give glad tidings [O Muhammad]	*wa bashshiri 'lladhīna*
to those who believe	*āmanū*
and do good works,	*wa 'amilu 'ṣ-ṣāliḥāti*
that for them there are Gardens	*anna la-hum jannātin tajrī*
underneath which rivers flow	*min taḥti-ha 'l-anhār*
Whenever they are provided with food	*kulla-mā ruziqū min-hā*
of the fruit thereof, they will say	*min thamaratin rizqan*
"This is the sustenance with which	*qālū hādha 'lladhī*
we were formerly provided," and they	*ruziqnā min-qablu*
will be given it in perfect semblance.	*wa utū bi-hi mutashābihā:*
And there for them	*wa la-hum fī-hā*
will be spouses purified,	*azwājun muṭahhara:*
and they will abide therein forever. (2:25)"	*wa hum fī-hā khālidūn.*

- "It must mean: 'So remember Me on the surface of the earth, and I will remember you inside it [in the grave], when your own relatives have forgotten you,' for, as al-Asma'ī has told us: 'I once saw an Arab tribesman *[A'rābī]* performing the rite of Standing at 'Arafāt, on the Day of 'Arafa, and he was saying: "My God *[Ilāhī]*, so many voices are crying out to You in various dialects, begging You to satisfy their needs. As for the need I have to set before You, it is that You will remember me in times of trial and tribulation, when my own relatives forget me."'"

- "It must mean: 'So remember Me here in this world, and I will remember you in the hereafter.'"

- "It must mean: 'So remember Me through acts of worshipful obedience *[ṭā'āt]*, and I will remember you through dispensations *[mu'āfāt]*.' The evidence for this interpretation is the statement of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Whoever does a righteous deed,	*man 'amila ṣāliḥan*
whether it be a male or a female,	*min dhakarin aw unthā*
and is a believer,	*wa huwa mu'minun*
We shall surely cause him [or her]	*fa-la-nuḥyiyanna-hu ḥayātan*
to live a good life,	*ṭayyiba:*
and We shall pay them their	*wa la-najziyanna-hum*
recompense according to the best	*ajra-hum bi-aḥsani*
of what they used to do. (16:97)"	*mā kānū ya'malūn.*

- "It must mean: 'So remember Me in private and in public, and I will remember you in private and in public,' for, as we learn from traditional reports, Allāh (Exalted is He) has said in one of His Books:

> "'I am there when My servant thinks of Me, so let him think of Me whatever he wishes. I am with him when he remembers Me, so if someone remembers Me inside himself, I will remember him inside Myself, and if he remembers Me in a public setting, I will remember him in the company of the best of them. If someone draws near to Me by the width of a hand *[shibr]*, I will draw near to him by the length of a forearm *[dhirā']*. If someone draws near to Me by the length of a forearm, I will draw near to him by the breadth of two arms outstretched *[bā']*. If someone comes toward Me at a walking pace, I will come toward him at full speed *[harwalatan]*. If someone brings Me a basket the size of the earth, filled with sinful error, I will bring him an equally large container, filled with forgiveness, provided that he is not guilty of associating anything with Me.'"

• "It must mean: 'So remember Me in times of good fortune and prosperity, and I will remember you in times of hardship and misfortune,' for, as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said [speaking of Jonah (peace be upon him)]:

And had he not been one of those	*fa-law lā anna-hu kāna*
who glorify [the Lord], he would	*mina 'l-musabbiḥīna:*
have tarried in its belly until the day	*la-labitha fī baṭni-hi*
when they are resurrected.	*ilā yawmi yub'athūn.*
(37:143,144)	

It was Salmān al-Fārisī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "If the servant [of the Lord] addressed a supplication [to Him], while enjoying prosperity, and misfortune thereupon befell him, the angels would say: 'O our Lord, Your servant has been afflicted with misfortune!' They would promptly intercede on his behalf, and Allāh (Exalted is He) would grant them a positive response. If, on the other hand, he had offered no supplication to Him, they would say: 'What? Now?' and they would not intercede on his behalf. The proof of this is the story of Pharaoh *[Fir'aun]*, [who was told, when he protested belief in God on the point of drowning]:

What? Now? When hitherto	*āl-āna wa qad*
you have rebelled, and have been	*'aṣaita qablu*
one of those who act corruptly'	*wa kunta mina 'l-mufsidīn.*
(10:91)"	

• "It must mean: 'Remember Me through the surrender *[taslīm]* and delegation *[tafwīḍ]* [of your affairs to Me], and I will remember you by choosing the most suitable options [on your behalf].' The proof of this is the assurance given by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And when someone puts all his trust in Allāh, He will be enough for him. (65:3)."	*wa man yatawakkal* *'ala 'llāhi fa-Huwa ḥasbu-h.*

- "It must mean: 'Remember Me through intense yearning [*shauq*] and loving affection [*maḥabba*], and I will remember you through contact [*waṣl*] and nearness [*qurba*].'

[In each of the following interpretations, there is some kind of rhyme in the Arabic:]

- "Remember Me through glorification [*majd*] and praise [*thanā'*], and I will remember you through the bestowal of gifts [*'aṭā'*] and recompense [*jazā'*]."
- "Remember Me through repentance [*tauba*], and I will remember you through the forgiveness of sin [*ghufrān al-ḥauba*]."
- "Remember Me through supplication [*du'ā'*], and I will remember you through the bestowal of gifts [*'aṭā'*]."
- "Remember Me through asking [*su'āl*], and I will remember you through giving [*nawāl*]."
- "Remember Me without neglect [*ghafla*], and I will remember you without delay [*muhla*]."
- "Remember Me through feeling remorse [*nadam*], and I will remember you by conferring honor [*karam*]."
- "Remember Me through apology [*ma'dhira*], and I will remember you through forgiveness [*maghfira*]."
- "Remember Me through good intention [*irāda*], and I will remember you through ensuring good results [*ifāda*]."
- "Remember Me through the renunciation of bad habits [*tanaṣṣul*], and I will remember you through the granting of gracious favors [*tafaḍḍul*]."
- "Remember Me through sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*], and I will remember you through salvation [*khalāṣ*]."
- "Remember Me with your hearts [*qulūb*], and I will remember you through the removal of anxieties [*kurūb*]."
- "Remember Me without forgetfulness [*nisyān*], and I will remember you with faithfulness [*īmān*]."

- "Remember Me through impoverishment *[iftiqār]*, and I will remember you through empowerment *[iqtidār]*."
- "Remember Me through seeking pardon and forgiveness *[al-iʿtidhār wa 'l-istighfār]*, and I will remember you through compassion and forgiveness *[ar-raḥma wa 'l-ightifār]*."
- "Remember Me through true faith *[īmān]*, and I will remember you by granting access to the Gardens of Paradise *[Jinān]*."
- "Remember Me through submission *[islām]*, and I will remember you through honorable treatment *[ikrām]*."
- "Remember Me with the heart *[qalb]*, and I will remember you through the removal of the veils *[ḥujub]*."
- "Remember Me with a remembrance that is fleeting *[dhikran fāniyan]*, and I will remember you with a remembrance that is everlasting *[dhikran bāqiyan]*."
- "Remember Me through humble supplication *[ibtihāl]*, and I will remember you through the bestowal of gracious favor *[ifḍāl]*."
- "Remember Me through self-abasement *[tadhallul]*, and I will remember you through the forgiveness of sinful mistakes *[zalal]*."
- "Remember Me through the confession of sins *[iʿtirāf]*, and I will remember you through the eradication of guilt *[iqtirāf]*."
- "Remember Me through purity of the innermost being *[sirr]*, and I will remember you through pure kindness *[birr]*."
- "Remember Me with truthfulness *[ṣidq]*, and I will remember you with tenderness *[rifq]*."
- "Remember Me through serenity *[ṣafw]*, and I will remember you through pardon *[ʿafw]*."
- "Remember Me through exaltation *[taʿẓīm]*, and I will remember you through ennoblement *[takrīm]*."
- "Remember Me through the affirmation of My Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*, and I will remember you through salvation from the blazing inferno *[saʿīr]*."
- "Remember Me through the abandonment of crude behavior *[jafā']*, and I will remember you through the fulfillment of the promise *[wafā']*."
- "Remember Me through the abandonment of error *[khaṭā']*, and I will remember you through all kinds of giving *[ʿaṭā']*."

- "Remember Me through strenuous exertion in service *[khidma]*, and I will remember you through the completion of benefit *[ni'ma]*."
- "Remember Me wherever you are *[haithu antum]*, and I will remember you wherever I am *[haithu Ana]*."

It was ar-Rabī' (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said, concerning this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*: "To those who remember Him, Allāh (Exalted is He) is One who is Ever-Remembering *[Dhākir]*, to those who give him thanks, He is a Giver of Surplus *[Zā'id]*, and to those disbelieve in Him, he is a Castigator *[Mu'adhdhib]*."

Likewise referring to this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*, as-Suddī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) remarked: "No servant [of the Lord] remembers Allāh (Exalted is He), without His remembering him in turn. No true believer *[mu'min]* remembers Him, without His remembering him in turn, through merciful compassion. No unbeliever *[kāfir]* remembers Him, without His remembering him in turn, through chastisement."

It was Sufyān ibn 'Uyaina (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "We have been told that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> "'I have given My servants such a gift that, if I had given it to Gabriel *[Jibrīl]* and Michael *[Mīkā'īl]*, I would have treated them most generously. For I have said to them [My servants]: "Remember Me, and I will remember you *[udhkurū-nī adhkur-kum]*." I also said to Moses *[Mūsā]*: "Tell the wrongdoers not to remember Me, for I remember those who remember Me, and My way of remembering them will be to damn them."'"

Abū 'Uthmān an-Nahdī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "I know when my Lord is remembering me." When someone asked him: "How can that be?" he replied: "Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

So remember Me,	*fa-'dhkurū-nī*
and I will remember you. (2:152)	*adhkur-kum.*

—so when I remember Allāh, [I know that] He remembers me."

It has also been said Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) conveyed *[awhā]* to David *[Dāwūd]* (peace be upon him) by way of inspiration: "O David, you must all rejoice because of Me, and take delight in My remembrance *[dhikrī]*."

It was ath-Thawrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "For everything there is a penalty. In the case of one who knows by direct experience *['ārif]*, the penalty is his separation from the remembrance of Allāh."

In the words of one anonymous report: "Once remembrance has taken possession of the heart, if Satan *[ash-Shaiṭān]* approaches it, he will suffer an epileptic fit *[ṣuri'a]*, just as an ordinary human being will be stricken with epilepsy, if Satan approaches him. When they ask: 'What is the matter with him [with Satan]?' they will be told: 'Humanity *[al-ins]* has touched him.'"

Sahl ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "I know of no act of sinful disobedience *[ma'ṣiya]* worse than forgetting this Noble and Generous Lord *[nisyān hādha 'r-Rabbi 'l-Karīm]*."

It has also been said that inwardly hidden remembrance *[dhikr khafī]* is not raised aloft by the angel, because he has no awareness of it, since it is a secret between the servant and Allāh (Exalted is He).

One of the wise has said: "I was given a good description of someone practicing remembrance *[dhākir]* in the forest, so I paid him a visit. While we were sitting there together, an enormous savage beast appeared on the scene. It struck him a blow, and bit off a piece of his skin, so he fainted, and I fainted too. When I recovered consciousness, I asked him: 'What was all that about?' He replied: 'Allāh has charged this savage beast with the task of overseeing me. Whenever I experience a lapse from my remembrance, it comes along and bites me, as you have just seen for yourself.'"

* * *

Concerning the practice of supplication *[duʿāʾ]*.

The practice of supplication *[duʿāʾ]* is referred to in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And your Lord has said:	*wa qāla Rabbu-kumu 'dʿū-nī*
"Call upon Me and I will answer you."	*adʿū-nī astajib la-kum.*
(40:60)	

—and in His words (Exalted is He):

So, as soon as you have finished,	*fa-idhā faraghta*
set to work, and present your request	*fa-'nṣab wa ilā Rabbi-ka*
to your Lord. (94:7,8)	*fa-'rghab.*

That is to say: "As soon as you have finished performing your ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, you must set about the task of presenting your supplication *[duʿāʾ]* to Him."

It is also referred to in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And when My servants question you	*wa idhā saʾala-ka ʿibādī ʿannī*
concerning Me, I am Near.	*fa-innī Qarīb:*
I answer the call of the caller,	*ujību daʿwata 'd-dāʿi*
when he calls out to Me.	*idhā daʿā-ni.*
So let them respond to Me,	*fa-l-yastajībū lī*
and let them believe in Me,	*wa l-yuʾminū bī*
in order that they may be led aright.	*laʿalla-hum yarshudūn.*
(2:186)	

The traditional commentators *[mufassirūn]* have held differing views concerning the revelation of this Qurʾānic verse *[āya]*. For instance, Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported[381] as having said:

"The Jews *[Yahūd]* among the people of Medina once asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'How can our Lord hear our prayer of supplication *[duʿāʾ]*, when you maintain that, between us and the heaven above, there is a distance of five hundred years, and that the thickness of each heaven is equal to that?" It was then that this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* was sent down:

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[381] **Author's note**: For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: **al-Kalbī — Abū Ṣāliḥ — Ibn ʿAbbās** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

And when My servants question you concerning Me, I am Near. (2:186)"	*wa idhā sa'ala-ka 'ibādī 'annī* *fa-innī Qarīb.*

It was al-Ḥasan [al-Basri] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "The Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) asked: 'Where is our Lord?' So Allāh (Exalted is He) sent down this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*."

'Aṭā' and Qatāda (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them) both said: "When this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* was sent down:

And your Lord has said: "Call upon Me and I will answer you." (40:60)	*wa qāla Rabbu-kumu 'd'ū-nī* *ud'ū-nī astajib la-kum.*

—a man said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, how should we appeal to our Lord, and when should we offer our supplication to Him?' So Allāh (Exalted is He) sent down this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*:

And when My servants question you concerning Me, I am Near. (2:186)"	*wa idhā sa'ala-ka 'ibādī 'annī* *fa-innī Qarīb.*

It was aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Some of the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) asked him: 'Is our Lord near, so that we may whisper to Him, or is He distant, so that we need to call out loud to Him?' So Allāh (Exalted is He) sent down this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*:

And when My servants question you concerning Me, I am Near. (2:186)"	*wa idhā sa'ala-ka 'ibādī 'annī* *fa-innī Qarīb.*

According to those who seek to decipher the inner meanings *[ahl al-ma'ānī]*, there is a hidden significance *[idmār]* to these words, as if He had said: "Say to them, or let them know, that I am Near to them through knowledge *['ilm]*." According to those who concentrate on symbolism *[ahl al-ishāra]*, the message is: "Dispensing with indirect mediation *[wisāṭa]* amounts to revealing the source of Power *[Qudra]*."

As for the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

I answer the call of the caller,	*ujību da'wata 'd-dā'i*
when he calls out to Me.	*idhā da'ā-ni*
So let them respond to Me. (2:186)	*fa-l-yastajībū lī*

—the meaning is: "So let them respond to Me through obedience *[ṭā'a]*." Some say that the Arabic verbs *ajāba* and *istajāba* are synonymous,[582] but Abū Rajā' al-Khurāsānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) maintained that the Arabic expression *fa-l-yastajībū lī* means: "So let them appeal to Me *[fa-l-yad'ūnī]*."

In classical Arabic usage, the verbal noun *ijāba* means "[responding with] obedience *[ṭā'a]*, and giving *[i'ṭā']* what has been requested." For instance, to make the statement: "The sky responded *[ajābat]* with rain, and the earth responded *[ajābat]* with vegetation," is a way of saying: "The sky was asked for rain, so it gave, and the earth was asked for vegetation, so it gave." When the *ijāba* [answering; responding] comes from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), it takes the form of giving *[i'ṭā']*, and when it comes from His servant, it takes the form of obedience *[ṭā'a]*.

The Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* continues, with His words:

And let them believe in Me,	*wa l-yu'minū bī*
in order that they may be led aright. (2:186)	*la'alla-hum yarshudūn.*

—that is to say: "so that they may be rightly guided *[li-kai yahtadū]*."

Let us now consider a question that might be raised concerning His words:

I answer the call of the caller,	*ujību da'wata 'd-dā'i*
when he calls out to Me. (2:186)	*idhā da'ā-ni.*
Call upon Me and I will answer you. (40:60)	*ud'ū-nī astajib la-kum*

Suppose someone should say: "That sounds fine, but we notice that many of Allāh's creatures appeal to Him (Exalted is He), yet receive no response. What is the explanation?" Well, as the questioner would have to be told, there is more than one possible explanation. Concerning the purport and interpretation *[ta'wīl]* of these two Qur'ānic verses *[āyatain]*, the religious scholars *[ahl al-'ilm]* have held several different opinions. For instance:

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[582] The words *ujību* (translated above as "I answer") and *yastajību* (translated as "[so let them] respond") are grammatically modified derivatives of the basic verbs *ajāba* and *istajāba*, respectively.

• In this context, the meaning of *duʿāʾ* [calling; appealing; supplication] is worshipful obedience *[ṭāʿa]*, and the meaning of *ijāba* [answering; responding] is the granting of spiritual reward *[thawāb]*. It is as if He had said (Almighty and Glorious is He): "I answer the call of the caller—by granting spiritual reward, when he obeys Me."

• The meaning of the two Qurʾānic verses *[āyatān]* is quite specific, despite the fact that their wording is comprehensive. Their implied significance *[taqdīr]* becomes explicit in expanded statements like:

- "I answer the call of the caller—if I so wish."
- "I answer the call of the caller—so long as he is ready to accept the verdict *[qaḍāʾ]*."
- "I answer the call of the caller—provided he does not ask for something totally absurd *[muḥāl]*."
- "I answer the call of the caller—whenever it is good for him to receive a response."

There is traditional evidence in favor of this interpretation, since Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported[383] as having said:

> If any Muslim appeals to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), with a supplication *[daʿwa]* that entails no estrangement of relatives *[qaṭīʿa raḥim]* and no sin, Allāh (Exalted is He) is bound to grant the supplicant one of three special favors: He may grant his request here and now, in this world, or He may keep it in store for him in the hereafter, or He may grant him a gift of equal value, in the form of protection from something bad.

When his listeners said: "In that case, O Messenger of Allāh, we should make a frequent practice of supplication *[duʿāʾ]*," he replied: "Allāh is Supremely Bountiful *[Allāhu Akthar]*!"

• This Qurʾānic verse *[āya]* makes a general and explicit statement, about nothing more than the answering of the call. As for the granting of the request, and the satisfaction of the need, these are not mentioned in the verse *[āya]*. A master may respond to his servant, and a father to his son, without necessarily granting his request. The response [of Allāh] will undoubtedly be there, when the call is received, because His saying, "I will answer *[ujību* and *astajīb]*," is a positive statement of fact *[khabar]*. A positive statement cannot be canceled by the negative, because such contradiction would mean that the person who made the statement was telling a lie. Highly Exalted is Allāh, far above and beyond anything of that kind!

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[383] **Author's note:** For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: **ʿAlī ibn Abiʾl-Mutawakkil—Abū Saʿīd** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

This interpretation *[ta'wīl]* is reinforced by a traditional report,[384] from which we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a doorway to supplication *[du'ā']* is opened up for someone, the doors of response *[ijāba]* will also be opened up for him.

Allāh (Exalted is He) conveyed to David *[Dāwūd]* (peace be upon him), by way of inspiration: "Tell the wrongdoers not to appeal to Me, for I have made it incumbent upon Myself to answer [anyone who appeals to Me], and if I respond to the wrongdoers, I shall do so by cursing them."

• Allāh (Exalted is He) may answer the call of the believer *[mu'min]* immediately, or He may postpone the granting of his wish, so that he will go on appealing to Him, and so that He will keep hearing the sound of his voice.

There is traditional evidence in favor of this interpretation, also, since Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported[385] as having said:

> The servant may appeal to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and He may love the sound. In that case, Allāh (Exalted is He) will say: "O Gabriel, fulfill the need of this servant of Mine, but postpone its fulfillment, for I would love to keep hearing his voice!" Then again, the servant may appeal to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and He may dislike the sound. In that case, Allāh (Exalted is He) will say: "O Gabriel, fulfill the need of this servant of Mine, on account of his sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*, and do so at once, for I would hate to keep hearing his voice!"

We are told that Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "I saw the Lord of Might and Glory *[Rabb al-'Izza]* in one of my dreams, so I said to Him: 'O my Lord, I appeal to You so often, yet You do not answer me!' To this He replied: 'O Yaḥyā, I love the sound of your voice!'"

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[384] **Author's note:** For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: **Nāfi'—Ibn 'Umar** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[385] **Author's note:** For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: **Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir—Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

- The practice of supplication *[du'ā']* requires the cultivation of certain habits, and the fulfillment of certain preconditions, which are the means to the response and the attainment of the wish. If someone cultivates these habits, and fulfills these preconditions, he will be qualified to receive the response. On the other hand, if someone neglects the former, or violates the latter, he will be one of those who are poorly equipped for the practice of supplication *[du'ā']*.

Someone asked Ibrāhīm ibn Ad'ham (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "What can be the matter with us? We appeal to Allāh, but He gives us no response!" To this he replied: "That is because you know about the Messenger, but you do not follow his exemplary custom *[Sunna]*. You are familiar with the Qur'ān, but you do not put it into practice. You consume the bounty of Allāh, but you do not offer thanks for it. You know about the Garden of Paradise, but you do not seek it, You know about the Fire of Hell, but you are not afraid of it. You know about Satan *[ash-Shaiṭān]*, but you do not wage war against him; you actually collaborate with him. You are aware of death, but you do not prepare for it. You bury the dead, but you do not learn a lesson from them. You ignore your own faults, but you pay constant attention to the faults of other people."

◆

Concerning the Rite of Immolation *[an-Naḥr]*.

Immolation *[nahr]*, meaning animal sacrifice, is referred to in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

[So pray to your Lord] and sacrifice. (108:1)	*[fa salli li-Rabbi-ka] wa 'nhar.*

The origin of the Rite of Immolation *[an-Nahr]* is the commandment given by Allāh (Exalted is He) to His Bosom Friend, Abrahām *[Khalīli-hi Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him), when Allāh (Exalted is He) delivered him from the fiery furnace of Nimrod, the cruel tyrant, and made him safe from his cunning devices and his torment. He said (peace be upon him):

"I am going to my Lord." (37:99)	*innī dhāhibun ilā Rabbī.*

—meaning: "[I am] emigrating *[muhājiran]* to my Lord." That is to say: "to my Lord's good pleasure in the Holy Land." [He also said:]

"He will guide me." (37:99)	*sa-yahdīn.*

—meaning: "to His religion *[dīn]*."

Of all the creatures of Allāh, Abrahām *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) was the first to emigrate for the sake of the religion *[dīn]* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). When he emigrated *[hājara]*, he was joined by Lot *[Lūt]* and Sarah *[Sāra]*, the sister of Lot, who was the son of the maternal uncle of Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him). As soon as he reached the Holy Land, he asked his Lord to grant him offspring, saying:

"My Lord, give me one of the righteous." (37:100)	*Rabbi* *hab lī mina 's-sālihīn*

—in other words: "Give me a righteous son." Allāh granted his request, for He said (Exalted is He):

So We gave him the good tidings of a gentle boy. (37:101)	*fa-bashsharnā-hu* *bi-ghulāmin ḥalīm.*

—[probably] meaning: "one who is endowed with knowledge [*ʿalīm*]," though He is the All-Knowing One [*Huwa 'l-ʿĀlim*]. That son was Isaac [*Isḥāq*], the son of Sarah.

Then, when he had reached the age of walking briskly with him…	*fa-lammā balagha maʿa-hu 's-saʿya* *maʿa-hu 's-saʿya.*

—that is to say: "of walking to the mountain."

He said: "O my dear son, I have seen in a dream that I must sacrifice you."	*qāla yā bunayya innī arā* *fi 'l-manāmi* *annī adhbaḥu-ka.*

—meaning: "I have been commanded, in my dream, to sacrifice you." That was because of a vow he had sworn (peace be upon him) in his dream. When he said to his son:

"So look, what do you think?"	*fa-'nẓur mā dhā tarā.*

—he replied (peace be upon him):

"O my father, you must do what you are commanded. (37:102)	*yā abati 'fʿal* *mā tuʾmar.*

—and obey your Lord." (It should be noted that Isaac [*Isḥāq*] did not say to Abraham [*Ibrāhīm*]: "You must do what you saw in your dream," although Abraham [*Ibrāhīm*] (peace be upon him) saw that [same dream] on each of three consecutive nights.)

Abraham [*Ibrāhīm*] (peace be upon him) fasted and prayed [*ṣāma wa ṣallā*] before the sacrifice, and he said:

"You will find me, if Allāh so wills, to be one of those who are patient." (37:102)	*sa-tajidu-nī in shāʾa 'llāhu* *mina 'ṣ-ṣābirīn.*

—meaning: "[patient] in enduring the sacrifice."

Then, when they had both surrendered…	*fa-lammā aslamā*

—that is to say: "when they had both surrendered to the commandment of Allāh (Exalted is He), and in obedience to Him."

and he had flung him down upon his brow… (37:103)	*wa talla-hu* *li'l-jabīni…*

—that is to say: "when he had laid him prostrate on his forehead," and when he seized him by his forelock, in order to sacrifice him for the sake of Allāh, Allāh acknowledged their truthfulness [*ṣidq*], and He called out (Almighty and Glorious is He):

"O Abraham, you have now confirmed the vision (37:104,105)	*yā Ibrāhīm:* *qad ṣaddaqta 'r-ru'yā*

—concerning the sacrifice of your son, so now take the ram, and sacrifice it as your son's ransom." Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) then said:

And We ransomed him with a mighty sacrifice. (37:107)	*wa fadainā-hu* *bi-dhibḥin 'aẓīm.*

The name of the ram was Zarīr. It was one of the mountain sheep that graze in the Garden of Paradise for forty years, before they are slaughtered. According to one account, it was the ram that was sacrificed by Abel *[Hābīl]*, the son of Adam, who was slain as a martyr *[shahīd]* (peace be upon him), and it used to graze in the Garden of Paradise. In any case, it became the means by which the Prophet Isaac *[Isḥāq an-Nabī]* (peace be upon him) was ransomed from slaughter.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) then said:

That is how We recompense the doers of good. (37:110)	*ka-dhālika* *najzī 'l-muḥsinīn.*

—meaning: "That is how We recompense every true lover *[muḥibb]*." Thus did Allāh recompense him with goodness, for his excellent obedience to the commandment of Allāh (Exalted is He), concerning the sacrifice of his son Isaac *[Isḥāq]*. (According to some, Ishmael *[Ismā'īl]* [peace be upon him] was the son he was commanded to sacrifice.)

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) then said:

This is indeed the manifest trial. (37:106)	*inna hādhā la-huwa 'l-balā'u 'l-mubīn.*

—meaning: "the manifest blessing *[na'īm]*"—when He redeemed him and ransomed him with the ram.

One of the commentators has said: "When the Bosom Friend *[al-Khalīl]* (peace be upon him) placed the knife on the throat of his son, the call was given:

'O Abraham, (37:104)	*yā Ibrāhīm*

—release your son, for Our intended purpose is not the physical sacrifice of the son. Our intended purpose is only the heart's detachment from love of the son.'"

This is in keeping with the following account: "In some of the Scriptures *[Kutub]*, it is mentioned that Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) said in his innermost being *[sirr]*, when he was about to sacrifice his son: 'O my Lord, if only this sacrifice could be at the hand of someone other than me, that would be so much better!' But Allāh (Exalted is He) replied: 'It can only be at your hand.' The angels then asked: 'O our Lord, why have You acted like this?' He said: 'In order to add trial upon trial.' The angels said: 'Why is that?' He said: 'To ensure that he loves no one other than Me, for I will accept no partner in love *[sharīk fi'l-ḥubb]*."

Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) loved his son, so he was put to the test of sacrificing him. Jacob *[Ya'qūb]* loved Joseph *[Yūsuf]*, so he was absent from him for forty years, and put to the test by his separation. Our own Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) loved [his grandsons] al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusain (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), and they were attached to his heart, so Gabriel *[Jibrīl]* (peace be upon him) came and told him that one of them would be poisoned, and the other would be slain, so that he would not share his love of the Beloved *[Ḥabīb]* with anyone apart from Him.

Concerning the roads to be taken by the believer *[mu'min]* on his way to and from the Festival prayer *[ṣalāt al-'Īd]*.

When the believer sets out to attend the Festival prayer *[ṣalāt al-'Īd]*, following a particular route, he is recommended to return home by a different route. This advice is based on the report of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), who said that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) took one road [to the congregational prayer] on the Day of the Festival *[Yawm al-'Īd]*, and used a different road on his way back home. In another traditional report *[ḥadīth]*, we find the terse statement: "He used to go out by a road, and return by a road."

The experts have maintained a variety of opinions on this matter. According to the majority, the Prophet's purpose (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was simply to divide the forces of the polytheists *[mushrikīn]*, since they would have to guard both roads, if they sought to ambush his troops. Several other explanations have been suggested, however, including the following:

- His purpose was simply to shorten the return trip. It would seem that he took the longer route in the outgoing direction, because of the many good deeds [he used to perform along the way], and then returned by the shorter route.
- When he passed along one road, that stretch of the earth bore witness in his favor. Then he came home by a different road, so that another stretch of the earth could also bear witness in his favor.
- The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) passed through one of the tribal communities, then returned through the territory of others, in order to honor them equally, because the sight of him (Allāh

- That Allāh (Exalted is He) is not set apart in opposition to His creatures.
- That the scope of Allāh's effective power is not unlimited, so the people of the Garden of Paradise may be stranded forever in a state of immobility, while Allāh (Exalted is He) is unable to set them in motion, and since they are incapable of making themselves move. It is possible, however, for actions to be performed by the dead, the disabled and the decrepit.
- Abū Hudhail rejected the idea that Allāh (Exalted is He) has always been All-Hearing *[Samīʿ]*.

2. As for the Naẓẓāmiyya, their Shaikh an-Naẓẓām used to teach that inanimate bodies *[jamādāt]* are activated by the forces of nature. He used to deny the existence of accidents *[aʿrāḍ]*, with the exception of dependent motion *[ḥaraka iʿtimādiyya]*.

He maintained that the real human being is the spirit *[al-insān huwa'r-rūḥ]*, and that no one has seen the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), since all that anyone ever saw was his envelope *[ẓarf]*, meaning his physical body.

He made a radical break with the general consensus *[ijmāʿ]*, when he declared that if a person deliberately refrains from performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, even though he is reminded of it, he is not required to make it up later. He actually refused to recognize the infallibility of the general consensus of the Muslim community *[umma]*,[96] and allowed for the possibility that its members might agree to accept an untruth *[bāṭil]*.

He also maintained that faith *[īmān]* is the same thing as unbelief *[kufr]*, and that worshipful obedience *[ṭāʿa]* is the same thing as sinful disobedience *[maʿṣiya]*. He held that the conduct of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was no different from the conduct of Iblīs the accursed, and that the behavior of ʿUmar and ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with them both) was no different from the behavior of al-Ḥajjāj.[97] His emphasis on this theme, and his insistence on pursuing it, is less inexplicable than it may seem at first sight, because he often used to say: "All animate creatures are one single species *[al-ḥayawān kulluhu jins wāḥid]*."

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[96] In a well-known and frequently quoted tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) declared:

> My Community *[Ummatī]* will never agree on an error.

[97] The behavior of al-Ḥajjāj, as an early governor of ʿIrāq, was in fact notoriously harsh and brutal.

upon him) said in his innermost being *[sirr]*, when he was about to sacrifice his son: 'O my Lord, if only this sacrifice could be at the hand of someone other than me, that would be so much better!' But Allāh (Exalted is He) replied: 'It can only be at your hand.' The angels then asked: 'O our Lord, why have You acted like this?' He said: 'In order to add trial upon trial.' The angels said: 'Why is that?' He said: 'To ensure that he loves no one other than Me, for I will accept no partner in love *[sharīk fi'l-ḥubb]*."

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> piece of its meat, he will be awarded poultry in the Garden of Paradise, and those birds will be the size of Bactrian camels. For every one of its forelegs, he will be awarded one of the steeds of the Garden of Paradise. For every hair on its body, he will be awarded a palatial mansion in the Garden of Paradise. For every hair on its head, he will be awarded a maiden from among the houries *[al-ḥūr al-'īn]*.[386]
>
> "Surely you must know, O David, that the animal sacrifices *[ḍaḥāyā]* represent the riding animals *[maṭāyā]* [of Paradise], and that those sacrifices *[ḍaḥāyā]* wipe out sinful errors *[khaṭāyā]* and drive away misfortunes *[balāyā]*. You must command the offering of animal sacrifices *[ḍaḥāyā]*, for they are the ransom of the believer *[mu'min]*, like the ransom of Isaac *[Isḥāq]* from slaughter."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> You must treat your sacrificial animals *[ḍaḥāyā]* properly, for they will be your riding animals *[maṭāyā]* on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*.

It is reported that 'Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) first recited:

On the day when We shall muster	*yauma naḥshuru 'l-muttaqīna*
the truly devout unto the All-Merciful,	*ila 'r-Raḥmāni*
as a delegation… (19:85)	*wafdā…*

—then went on to say: "And what will the delegation *[wafd]* consist of, other than riders mounted on their thoroughbred camels? Those thoroughbred camels of theirs are now their sacrificial animals *[ḍaḥāyā]*. [At the Resurrection] they will be provided with she-camels, the likes of which no creatures have ever seen, and these will be equipped with saddles of gold and bridles of chrysolite. Then they will transport them to the Garden of Paradise, so that they may enter through its gate."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> Offer your sacrifices, and feel happy about letting them go, for if someone takes his sacrificial animal *[uḍḥiyya]*, and turns it to face the Qibla [direction of the Ka'ba], its blood and its hair will be preserved for him until the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*. When the blood falls into the dust, it is falling into Allāh's safekeeping. Spend freely, that you may be recompensed abundantly!

It is traditionally reported that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) sent for two enormous rams, black-and-white beasts with horns. Having laid one of them on its side, he said:

In the Name of Allāh,	*Bismi'llāhi 'r-*
the All-Merciful,	*Raḥmāni 'r-*
the All-Compassionate.	*Raḥīm.*

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[386] See note 42 on p. 26 above.

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
this is on behalf of Muhammad,	*hādhā 'an Muhammadin*
and on behalf of Muhammad's family	*wa 'an āli Muhammad*

He then did the same with the other ram, and said:

In the Name of Allāh,	*Bismi'llāhi 'r-*
the All-Merciful,	*Rahmāni 'r-*
the All-Compassionate.	*Rahīm.*
O Allāh, [accept] this on behalf	*Allāhumma hādhā*
of Muhammad, and on behalf	*'an Muhammadin wa 'an*
of the members of his Community.	*ahli Ummati-h.*

As reported on the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) sacrificed two rams on the Day of Immolation *[Yawm an-Naḥr]*.

Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt ['Father of Blessings'] Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has informed us, after listing the authorities by whom the report was transmitted,[387] that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone brings his sacrificial animal *[udhiyya]* to its place of slaughter, on the Day of Immolation *[Yawm an-Naḥr]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will bring him close to the Garden of Paradise. Then, when he slaughters it, Allāh will grant him forgiveness, with the first drop of blood that drips from its veins. Allāh (Exalted is He) will provide him with a means of transport to the gathering place, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*. He will also credit him with ten good deeds, for every strand of its hair or wool.

As reported on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) sacrificed two rams, black-and-white beasts with horns *[aqranain amlahain]*. While performing the slaughter, he would invoke the Name of Allāh, and set his foot on the side [of the animal]."

Abū 'Ubaida explained: "The term *amlah* is applied to an animal that is partly white and partly black, with the blackness predominating. It 'sees in blackness and kneels in blackness.'"

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[387] **Author's note.** Shaikh Imām Abu'l-Barakāt Hibatu'llāh ibn al-Mubārak as-Saqatī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn al-Harth al-Mu'addil al-Kūfī—al-Qādī** [the Judge] **Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn 'AbdiṢllāh al-Ja'fī—Muhammad ibn Ja'far al-Ashja'ī 'Alī ibn al-Mundhir at-Ṭarafī—Ibn Fuḍail—Hishām—'Urwa—his father—'Ā'isha** (may Allāh be well pleased with her)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Concerning the differences of opinion among the religious scholars as to why the Place of Standing *[al-Mawqif]* came to be called ʿArafāt, while the day spent standing there became known as [the Day of] ʿArafa.

In attempting to account for the significance of the fact that the Place of Standing *[al-Mawqif]* is called ʿArafāt, while the day spent standing there is known as [the Day of] ʿArafa, the religious scholars *[ʿulamāʾ]* have offered several different explanations. For instance, aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk has said:

"When Adam (peace be upon him) was cast down to the earth, he landed in India *[al-Hind]*, while Eve *[Ḥauwāʾ]* alighted at Jidda [on the western coast of Arabia]. Adam therefore set out in search of her, and she went searching for him. They eventually became reunited at ʿArafāt, on the Day of ʿArafa, and there they recognized each other *[taʿārafā]*. That explains why this day was called the Day of ʿArafa, and the place was named ʿArafāt."

To quote the explanation offered by as-Suddī: "The site was named ʿArafāt for no other reason than the following: Hagar *[Hājar]* became pregnant with Ishmael *[Ismāʿīl]*, so [when the child was born] she took him out of town, to get away from the presence of Sarah *[Sāra]*. Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) was absent at the time, so it was only when he came home, and saw no sign of Ishmael (peace be upon him), that Sarah told him what Hagar had done. He promptly set out in search of Ishmael, and eventually found him with Hagar at ʿArafāt. Since that was where he recognized him *[ʿarafa-hu]*, the place came to be known as ʿArafāt."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) set out on a journey that would take him beyond Palestine *[Filasṭīn]*, so Sarah made him swear that he would not

Concerning the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* of the Night of Sacrifice *[Lailat al-Aḍḥā]*.

In the ritual prayer of the Night of Sacrifice *[ṣalāt Lailat al-Aḍḥā]*, the worshipper must perform two cycles of prayer *[rak'atain]*, reciting in each cycle:

- the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]*—fifteen times, and the Sūras that begin with:

• Say: "He is Allāh, One!" (112:1)	*qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad.*
• Say: "I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak." (113:1)	*qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'l-falaq.*
• Say: "I take refuge with the Lord of mankind." (114:1)	*qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'n-nās.*

—likewise fifteen times each.

When he has pronounced the salutation *[sallama]* [at the conclusion of the prayer], he should:

- recite the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[388]—three times;
- seek forgiveness of Allāh—fifteen times, and then:
- appeal for whatever he wishes from the good of this world and the hereafter.

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[388] Q. 2:255.

Concerning the fact that the animal sacrifice *[udḥiyya]* is a recommended customary practice *[sunna]*.

The animal sacrifice *[udhiyya]* is a customary practice *[sunna]*, the omission of which is not recommended for anyone who is capable of performing it. Such is the doctrine of Imām Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal, Imām Mālik and Imām ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them all). According to other authorities, however, it is strictly necessary *[wājiba]*. The basic support for its recommended status *[istiḥbāb]*, as opposed to its strict necessity *[wujūb]*, is the traditional report of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), who stated that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> I have been commanded to perform the rite of immolation *[nahr]*, whereas for you it is simply a customary practice *[sunna]*.

According to another traditional report *[khabar]*, [the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said]:

> Three things are obligatory *[fard]* as far as I am concerned, while for you they are voluntary practices *[tatawwu']*—namely, the rite of immolation *[nahr]*, the odd-numbered ritual prayer *[witr]*,[369] and the two [extra] cycles of prayer at the time of dawn *[rak'atayi 'l-fajr]*.

According to the traditional report *[hadīth]* of Umm Salama (may Allāh be well pleased with her), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When the Ten [Days of Dhu'l-Hijja] come around, and one of you wishes to offer a sacrifice, he should not do anything to alter its hair or its skin.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) thus made the animal sacrifice *[udhiyya]* contingent upon the wish *[irāda]* [of the individual concerned], whereas that which is strictly necessary *[wājib]*, according to the sacred law *[shar']*, cannot be contingent on the wish [of an individual to perform it].

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[369] See note 269 on p. 132 above.

Concerning the animals that are most suitable for sacrifice.

The animals most suitable for sacrifice are camels, then bovines, and then sheep or goats. In the case of sheep, only the *jadha'* is acceptable, while the *thanī* is acceptable in other cases. As for the *jadha'*, it is an animal that is fully six months old, while the term *thanī* is applied to a goat that is one year old, to a bovine that is two years old, and to a camel that is five years old.

A sheep is acceptable as a sacrificial offering from a single individual, and a fat camel or bovine as a collective offering from a group of seven.

[As far as color is concerned] the best sacrificial animals *[ḍaḥāyā]* are the gray, then the yellow, then the black.

The most meritorious procedure is to perform the act of sacrifice oneself. If an individual lacks the necessary skill for this, he should at least witness the slaughter of his sacrificial animal. He should then eat one third of it himself, present one third of it to someone as a personal gift, and donate one third of it to charity.

Care must be taken to ensure that the sacrificial animal is not defective. The most serious defects are represented by these five specimens:

1. An animal that has a broken horn or a slit ear *['adbā']*, meaning one that has lost the greater part of one of its ears or horns. (According to some, the animal is unsuitable if it has lost one third of one of its ears or horns.) The completely hornless ewe *[jammā']* is likewise unsuitable for sacrifice, because it is equivalent to the aforementioned *'adbā'*, according to the sounder of the two expert opinions on this subject.

2. A one-eyed creature *['awrā']* whose one-eyed condition *['awar]* is clearly apparent, meaning that one of its eyes has sunk deep into the socket and disappeared.

3. An emaciated animal *['ajfā']* with no fat on its bones, meaning a skinny creature that has no marrow *[mukhkh]* inside it.

4. A lame animal *['arjā']* whose lameness *['araj]* is clearly apparent, since it cannot move about freely, and is too weak to gather its share of fodder.

5. An animal so sick *[marīda]* that its sickness *[marad]* is clearly apparent, or one that is mangy *[jarbā']*, because its mangy condition *[jarab]* will spoil its meat.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also forbade the sacrifice of the *muqābala*, meaning an animal with a slit in the front part of its ear, so that it hangs over its forehead; the *mudābara*, meaning an animal with a slit in the back part of its ear; the *kharqā'*, meaning one that has had its ear perforated by branding; and the *sharfā'*, meaning one that has had its ear split by branding. This should be construed as encouragement to avoid all imperfection *[tanzīh]*, and not as absolute prohibition *[taḥrīm]*. In other words, while the best course is to avoid that kind of animal, the sacrifice thereof is nevertheless permissible.

The Days of Immolation *[Ayyām an-Naḥr]* are three: the Day of the Festival *[Yaum al-'Īd]*, after the [congregational] ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* or the corresponding time [for those unable to attend], and two days immediately thereafter. Such is the doctrine *[madhhab]* held by the majority of the Islāmic jurists *[fuqahā']*, although ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) spoke of "the Day of the Festival *[Yaum al-'Īd]* and the three Days of *Tashrīq*." As for our statement that there are three days altogether, this is based on traditional reports from 'Umar, 'Alī, Ibn 'Abbās and Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with them all).

If someone slaughters his sacrificial animal before the ritual prayer conducted by the leader *[ṣalāt al-imām]*, it is merely "a lump of sheep's meat." For that he will not receive the spiritual reward of the rite of sacrifice, since al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported[190] as having said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) addressed us with a sermon, after the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* on the Day of Immolation *[Yaum an-Naḥr]*, in which he said:

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[190] **Author's note.** For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: **Manṣūr—ash-Sha'bī—'Abd al-Barrā' ibn 'Āzib** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

> "'If someone performs our ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and then performs the rites [of sacrifice], those rites *[nusuk]* will achieve their purpose. But if someone performs the rites before the ritual prayer, that [sacrificial animal] will be nothing but a lump of sheep's meat *[shāt laḥm]*.'

"Abū Burda ibn Nayyār (may Allāh be well pleased with him) thereupon stood up and said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, I performed my rites of sacrifice before I left home to attend the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. I understood that today is a day of eating and drinking, so I made haste to provide a meal for my family and my neighbors. Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded to this by saying: 'That is nothing but a lump of sheep's meat *[shāt laḥm]*.' Abū Burda then went on to say: 'I also have a young she-goat *['anāq jadha'a]*, which is even better than my "lump of sheep's meat." Will that be acceptable as an offering from me?' To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'Yes, but it will not be accepted from anyone after you!'"

Al-Aswad ibn Qais (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "On the Day of Immolation *[Yaum an-Naḥr]*, I saw the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) pass by some people who had slaughtered [their sacrificial animals] before the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. He said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If someone slaughters [his sacrificial animal] before the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, let him repeat [his sacrifice].

According to one of the traditional reports *[akhbār]* [the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said]:

> If anyone slaughtered [his sacrificial animal] before he performed the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, let him repeat [his sacrifice] by replacing it with another, and if anyone has not yet slaughtered, let him go ahead and slaughter [now that the prayer has been performed].

◆

Concerning the remembrance *[dhikr]* of Allāh during the Days of *Tashrīq*.

Referring to the practice of remembrance *[dhikr]* during the Days of *Tashrīq*, Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

And remember Allāh	*wa 'dhkuru 'llāha*
during certain numbered days.	*fī ayyāmin ma'dūdāt.*
(2:203)	

This remembrance is expressed through the declaration of His Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*, in the wake of the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*, with every pebble that is thrown at the Pillars *[Jamarāt]* [representing the Devil], and at other times. Its practice is recommended from the first of the Ten [Days of Dhu'l-Ḥijja] until the last of the Days of *Tashrīq*.

The words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

during certain numbered days.	*fī ayyāmin ma'dūdāt.*
(2:203)	

—refer to the Days of *Tashrīq*, the three days spent at Minā,[391] while the days called "appointed *[ma'lūmat]*," in His words (Exalted is He):

That they may witness things that are	*li-yashhadū manāfi'a la-hum*
of benefit to them, and mention	*wa yadhkuru 'sma 'llāhi*
the Name of Allāh on days appointed	*fī ayyāmin ma'lūmātin*
over such beasts of the flocks	*'alā mā razaqa-hum min*
as He has provided for them.	*bahīmati 'l-an'ām*
(22:28)	

—are the Ten Days [of Dhu'l-Ḥijja], according to the majority of the religious scholars. This view is supported by the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Then if someone hastens	*fa-man*
[his departure] by two days,	*ta'ajjala fī yaumaini*
no sin is counted against him,	*fa-lā ithma 'alai-h:*
and if someone delays,	*wa man ta'akhkhara*
no sin is counted against him.	*fa-lā ithma.*

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[391] See pp. 198–215 above.

This applies to one	*'alai-hi*
who is devoted to his duty.	*li-mani 'ttaqā:*
Be careful of your duty to Allāh,	*wa 'ttaqu 'llāha*
and know that unto Him	*wa 'lamū anna-kum ilai-hi*
you will be mustered. (2:203)	*tuḥsharūn.*

This means that the [Pilgrim's] departure may take place during the Days of *Tashrīq*—either two of those days, or possibly all three of them.

According to Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father): "Allāh (Exalted is He) has ordained His remembrance during the 'numbered days *[al-ayyām al-ma'dūdāt]*,' they being the Days of *Tashrīq*, which are three days following the [Day of] Immolation *[an-Naḥr]*. He described them as 'numbered' because of their being but a few, out of all the days of your life, just as He said (Exalted is He), concerning the month of Ramaḍān:

[Fast during] certain numbered days. (2:184)	*ayyāman ma'dūdāt.*

—because they are so few, out of [all the days of all] the months. He has likewise used the expression "numbered" in His words (Exalted is He):

And they sold him for a paltry price,	*wa sharau-hu bi-thamanin bakhsin*
a handful of numbered silver coins,	*darāhima ma'dūda:*
for they set small store by him. (12:20)"	*wa kānū fī-hi mina 'z-zāhidīn.*

One of the commentators has offered the following interpretation: "They are described as 'numbered' for the simple reason that they are numbered, or counted, as he [the Pilgrim] goes through the days of the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, performing the rites appropriate to each day, such as the overnight stay *[baitūta]* at Muzdalifa and the stoning of the Pillars *[Jimār]* at Minā."

It was az-Zajjāj who said: "In classical Arabic usage, the term *ma'dūdāt* [numbered; counted] is applied to something that is *qalīl* [small in quantity; few in in number]. In this particular instance, it was applied because they are only three days, since the 'numbered days' are the three Days of *Tashrīq*. As for the remembrance *[dhikr]* ordained for them, it is expressed through the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*."

As reported on the authority of Nāfi', Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "The 'numbered days *[al-ayyām al-ma'dūdāt]*' are three days all told: namely, the Day of Immolation *[Yaum an-Naḥr]* and two days after it."

According to Ibrāhīm an-Nakha'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "The 'numbered days *[al-ayyām al-ma'dūdāt]*' are the Ten Days [of Dhu'l-Ḥijja], while the 'days appointed *[al-ayyām al-ma'lūmāt]*' are the Days of Immolation *[Ayyām an-Naḥr]*."

As for the context in which Allāh (Exalted is He) commanded the Muslims to practice remembrance *[dhikr]*, in this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* (2:203) and the one preceding it, in which He said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And when you have performed	*fa-idhā qaḍaitum manāsika-kum*
your holy rites, remember Allāh,	*fa-'dhkurū 'llāha*
as you remember your fathers	*ka-dhikri-kum*
or with a more intense remembrance.	*ābā'a-kum au ashadda dhikrā.*
(2:200)	

—the traditional commentators *[mufassirūn]* have provided the following background information: When the [pre-Islāmic] Arabs had completed their Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, they used to stand by the House *[Bait]* and remember the exploits of their fathers and their glorious deeds. A man might say: "My father would always receive his guest with warm hospitality. He would always provide good food. He would sacrifice a camel fit for slaughter, and shear the forelocks [of other animals]. He would do such-and-such, and such-and-such." They used to compete with one another in making such boastful claims, so Allāh (Exalted is He) commanded His remembrance. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) sent down the revelation:

And when you have performed	*fa-idhā qaḍaitum manāsika-kum*
your holy rites, remember Allāh,	*fa-'dhkurū 'llāha*
as you remember your fathers	*ka-dhikri-kum*
or with a more intense remembrance.	*ābā'a-kum au ashadda dhikrā.*
(2:200)	

—and so on, through to His words (Exalted is He):

And remember Allāh	*wa 'dhkurū 'llāha*
during certain numbered days.	*fī ayyāmin ma'dūdāt*
(2:203)	

He also said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

"So remember Me (2:152)	*fa-'dhkurū-nī*

—for I am the One who made that possible for your fathers, and for you. I am the One who treated them and you so well."

It was as-Suddī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "When the [pre-Islāmic] Arabs had performed their holy rites [of Pilgrimage], and stationed themselves at Minā, a man would stand up and petition Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), saying: 'O Allāh, my father was remarkable for his generosity, his hospitality, and his considerable wealth, so grant me the equivalent thereof!' He would not remember Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), but only his father, and his request would only extend to his interest in this world. That is why Allāh (Exalted is He) sent down this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*."

According to Ibn 'Abbās, 'Aṭā', ar-Rabī' and aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk: "Its meaning is: 'Remember Allāh (Exalted is He) in the way that little children remember their parents.' That is to say, 'in the way that a young child learns to speak.' A young child starts by repeating, and coming to understand, the speech of his father and mother. That is how he becomes devoted to his father and his mother."

As reported by 'Umar ibn Mālik, it was Abu'l-Jawzā' who told him: "I said to Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father): 'Tell me about the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Remember Allāh,	*fa-'dhkurū 'llāha*
as you remember your fathers	*ka-dhikri-kum*
or with a more intense remembrance.	*ābā'a-kum aw ashadda dhikrā.*
(2:200)	

—and explain why a more intense remembrance may be required. Is that because a man may experience a day in which he does not remember his father?' Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) replied: 'That is not the point. The point is that the anger you feel for the sake of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), when he is disobeyed, should be even more intense than the anger you feel for the sake of your parents, when they are insulted.'"

In commenting on the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Remember Allāh,	*fa-'dhkurū 'llāha*
as you remember your fathers	*ka-dhikri-kum*
or with a more intense remembrance.	*ābā'a-kum aw ashadda dhikrā.*
(2:200)	

—Muhammad ibn Ka'b al-Quraẓī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) said: "The expression: 'or with a more intense... *[aw ashadda...]*' carries the full force of: 'nay, with an even more intense... *[bal ashadda...]*,' just as, in His words:

And We sent him to	*wa arsalnā-hu*
a hundred thousand [folk],	*ilā mi'ati alfin*
or a greater number. (37:147)	*aw yazīdūn.*

—the expression: 'or a greater number *[aw yazīdūn]*' carries the full force of: 'nay, an even greater number *[bal yazīdūn]*.'" According to Muqātil (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the expression: *ashadda dhikrā* [lit., 'more intense in respect of remembrance'] signifies: 'with more frequent remembrance *[akthara dhikrā]*.' Comparable expressions occur in His words (Exalted is He):

Then your hearts were hardened,	*thumma qasat qulūbu-kum*
even after that, and became	*min ba'di dhālika fa-hiya*
like rocks or even harder still.	*ka-'l-hijārati aw ashaddu qaswa.*
(2:74)	

—[where *ashaddu qaswa* (lit., 'more in intense in respect of hardness') means: 'harder' or 'even harder still'] and:

A party of them fear the people	*farīqun min-hum yakhshauna 'n-*
as they fear Allāh,	*nāsa ka-khashyati 'llāhi*
or with an even greater fear.	*aw ashadda khashya.*
(4:77)	

—[where *ashadda khashya* (lit., 'more in intense in respect of fear') means: 'with more fear,' or 'with an even greater fear.']

Concerning those things which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has called "a remembrance *[dhikr]*" in the Qur'ān.

In the Qur'ān, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has called several things "a remembrance or reminder *[dhikr]*." For instance, He has applied this name to the Torah *[Taurāh]*, for He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And We sent none [as Messengers]	*wa mā arsalnā*
before you, except men to whom	*min qabli-ka*
We conveyed by inspiration:	*illā rijālan nūḥī ilai-him*
"Question the people	*fa-'s'alū ahla 'dh-*
of the Remembrance,	*dhikri*
if it should be that you do not know."	*in kuntum lā ta'lamūn.*
(16:43)	

He has called the Qur'ān a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

This is a blessed Reminder	*wa hādhā dhikrun*
that We have revealed.	*mubārakun anzalnā-h.*
Will you then reject it? (21:50)	*a-fa antum la-hu munkirūn.*

He has called the Well-Kept Tablet *[al-Lauḥ al-Maḥfūẓ]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And We have written in the Psalms,	*wa la-qad katabnā fi 'z-Zabūri*
after the Remembrance:	*min ba'di 'dh-Dhikri*
"The earth shall be the inheritance	*anna 'l-arḍa yarithu-hā*
of My righteous servants." (21:105)	*'ibādiya 's-ṣāliḥūn*

He has called the admonition *[mau'iẓa]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

So, when they forgot that	*fa-lammā nasū*
of which they had been reminded,	*mā dhukkirū bi-hi*
We opened unto them	*fataḥnā 'alai-him abwāba*
the gates of everything until,	*kulli shai':*
even as they were rejoicing	*ḥattā idhā fariḥū*

in what they had been given,	*bi-mā ūtū*
We seized them unawares,	*akhadhnā-hum baghtatan*
and lo and behold,	*fa-idhā-hum*
they were sore confounded. (6:44)	*mublisūn*

He has called the Messenger *[Rasūl]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Allāh has sent down to you,	*qad anzala 'llāhu*
as a remembrance,	*ilai-kum dhikrā—*
a Messenger who recites to you	*rasūlan yatlū 'alai-kum*
the signs of Allāh, clear signs,	*āyāti 'llāhi*
so that He may bring forth those	*mubayyinātin li-yukhrija 'lladhīna*
who believe and do good works	*āmanū wa 'amilu 's-sāliḥāti*
from the dark shadows into the light.	*mina 'z-ẓulumāti ila 'n-nūr.*
(65:10,11)	

He has called goodness *[khair]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Or have they chosen other gods	*ami 'ttakhadhū*
apart from Him?	*min dūni-hi āliha:*
Say: "Bring your proof!	*qul hātū burhāna-kum:*
This is the Remembrance	*hādhā dhikru*
of those with me,	*man ma'iya*
and the Remembrance	*wa dhikru*
of those before me,	*man qablī: bal*
but most of them	*aktharu-hum*
do not know the truth,	*lā ya'lamūna 'l-ḥaqqa*
and so they are turning away."	*fa-hum mu'riḍūn.*
(21:24)	

He has called noble dignity *[sharaf]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

It is indeed a Reminder to you	*wa inna-hu la-dhikrun la-ka*
and to your people;	*wa li-qaumi-k:*
and you will surely be questioned.	*wa saufa tus'alūn.*
(43:44)	

He has called the Torah *[Taurāh]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

This is a Reminder for the mindful.	*dhālika dhikrā li'dh-dhākirīn.*
(11:114)	

He has called the afternoon ritual prayer *[salāt al-'aṣr]* a *dhikr*. In His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

[And he said:] "I have loved	*[fa-qāla] innī aḥbabtu*

the love of good things better than	*hubba 'l-khairi*
the remembrance of my Lord."	*'an dhikri Rabbī.*
(38:32)	

—"better than the remembrance of my Lord" means: "better than the afternoon ritual prayer *[ṣalāt al-'aṣr]*."

He has also called the Friday Congregational Prayer *[al-Jum'a]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

O you who believe! When the call	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanū*
is proclaimed for the prayer	*idhā nūdiya li'ṣ-ṣalāti*
on the Day of Congregation,	*min yaumi 'l-jumu'ati*
hasten to the remembrance of Allāh	*fa-'s'au ilā dhikri 'llāhi*
and leave trading aside.	*wa dharu 'l-bai'.*
That is better for you,	*dhālikum khairun la-kum*
if you did but know. (62:9)	*in kuntum ta'lamūn.*

He has called intercession *[shafā'a]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And [Joseph] said to the one	*wa qāla li'lladhī*
he thought would be released,	*ẓanna anna-hu*
of the two: "Mention me	*nājin min-humā 'dhkur-nī*
in the presence of your lord."	*'inda rabbi-k.*
(12:42)	

He has called both worshipful obedience *[ṭā'a]* and forgiveness *[maghfira]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

So remember Me,	*fa-'dhkurū-nī*
and I will remember you. (2:152)	*adhkur-kum.*

—meaning: "Remember Me through worshipful obedience *[ṭā'a]*, and I will remember you through forgiveness *[maghfira]*."

He has called the feeling of remorse *[nadāma]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And those who, when they commit	*wa 'lladhīna idhā fa'alū fāḥishatan*
an indecent act or wrong themselves,	*au ẓalamū anfusa-hum*
remember Allāh. (3:135)	*dhakarū 'llāha*

He has also called the affirmation of His Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And remember Allāh	*wa 'dhkurū 'llāha*
during certain numbered days.	*fī ayyāmin ma'dūdāt.*
(2:203)	

That is to say: "during the Days of *Tashrīq*."

Concerning differences of opinion as to why these days are called the Days of *Tashrīq*.

There are differences of opinion [among the scholars] as to how these days came to be called the Days of *Tashrīq*. According to one group of experts, the idolatrous polytheists *[mushrikīn]* used say: "Enter upon the time of sunrise, Thabīr, so that we may press forward *[ashriq Thabīr kai-mā nughīr]*." Thabīr is the name of a mountain [in the vicinity of Mecca], so they appealed to it for a sign of the sunrise *[shurūq]*,[392] because they would neither press forward, nor hastily disperse *[yufīḍūna]* from al-Muzdalifa, until after the sun had risen. With the advent of Islām, of course, that [idolatrous practice] was abolished.

According to some, they were called the Days of *Tashrīq* for the simple reason that, on those days, they used to cut the meat of their sacrificial animals into strips, and dry them in the sun *[yusharriqūna luḥūma 'l-aḍāhī]*.[393] Pieces of jerked meat *[qadīd]* are also called *[sharā'iq]*.

According to others, the ritual prayer of the Festival *[ṣalāt al-'Īd]* was called *Tashrīq* to distinguish it from the ritual prayer of the Day of Immolation *[ṣalāt Yaum an-Naḥr]*. The term *Tashrīq* was adopted with reference to the rising *[shurūq]* of the sun, that being the time prescribed for the Festival prayer. The worshipper *[muṣallī]* was called *al-musharriq* [he who turns toward the east], because the people [at prayer] expose themselves to the sun at that time. It was in this sense, therefore, that the Day of the Festival *[Yaum al-'Īd]* came to be called the Day of *Tashrīq*. The term was then applied to the Days of *Tashrīq*, pursuant to the Festival *['Īd]*.

Someone asked [Abu'l-Faiḍ] Dhu'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī[394] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "Why is the Place of Standing *[Mauqif]* called the Monument *[Ma'shar]*,[595] instead of being called the Sanctuary *[Ḥaram]*?" So he explained: "Because the Ka'ba is His House, and the Sanctuary *[Ḥaram]* is its checkpoint, while the Monument *[Ma'shar]* is its gateway. When the emissaries *[wāfidūn]* approach, He stops them at the first gateway, where they humble themselves before Him. Then He stops them at the second checkpoint, which is al-Muzdalifa, and when He observes their submissiveness *[taḍarru']*, He commands them to make their sacrificial offering *[qurbān]*. Once they have duly performed it, and purified themselves of sins, He commands them to visit [His House] in a state of ritual purity."

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[392] This explanation of the term *Tashrīq* is therefore based on the fact that it is derived from the same three-consonant root, *sh–r–q*, as the imperative verb *ashriq* [enter upon the time of sunrise] and the noun *shurūq* [sunrise].

[393] The word *tashrīq* is the verbal noun corresponding to the verb *yusharriqūna*.

[394] See note 37 on p. 25 above.

His questioner also asked him: "Why is it considered reprehensible to fast on the Days of *Tashrīq*?" To this he replied: "Because the people are the guests of Allāh (Exalted is He). They are being treated to His hospitality, and it is quite inappropriate for a guest to fast in the presence of his host."

Then he was asked: "O Abu'l-Faiḍ, what does it signify, when a man clings to the drapes of the Ka'ba?" He said: "His likeness is that of a man who is separated from his friend, because of an offense he has committed, so he clings to other men's coat-tails, begging them to intercede on his behalf, and persuade his friend to pardon his misconduct."

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[595] See note 363 on p. 213 above.

According to the same traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then went on to say:

> Throughout the entire month [of Ramaḍān], the Lord (Exalted is the Mention of His Name) will go on issuing this call: "My servants, men and women alike! Be of good cheer, be patient, and steadily persevere! I am about to grant you relief from trouble and pain, and you will shortly attain to My mercy and My generous favor."
>
> As soon as the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* has arrived, Gabriel (peace be upon him) will descend in the midst of a throng of angels. As they alight, they will pronounce benedictions upon every servant [of the Lord], who, whether standing erect or sitting down, is diligently engaged in the remembrance of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

According to another traditional report, also transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If Allāh were ever to allow the heavens and the earth to speak, they would surely greet those who keep the fast of Ramaḍān, hailing them with glad tidings of the Garden of Paradise.

According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted from 'Abdu'llāh ibn Abī Awfā (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The sleep of one who keeps the fast is an act of worshipful service *['ibāda]*, his silence is a declaration of the glory of the Lord *[tasbīḥ]*,[180] his prayer of supplication *[du'ā']* is sure to be accepted, and the merit of every good deed he performs is sure to be multiplied.

According to al-A'mash,[181] Abū Khaithama (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "They used to say: 'Ramaḍān in the case of Ramaḍān, the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* in the case of the Pilgrimage, the Day of Congregation *[Jum'a]* in the case of the Day of Congregation, and the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* in the case of the ritual prayer. These are sufficient in themselves as expiations *[kaffārāt]* for sins committed during their observance,[182] so long as the major sins *[kabā'ir]* are avoided.'"

As we learn from traditional reports, the Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Mu'minīn]*, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased ash-Shāfi'ī, and it is the doctrine of Abū Yūsuf and Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan. It is the best and most comprehensive of all the various opinions.

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[180] In other words, his silence is actually proclaiming: "*subḥāna'llāh* [Glory be to Allāh]!" (The term *tasbīḥ* is a verbal noun, derived from the same root—*s-b-ḥ*—as the word *subḥān*.)

[181] Abū Muḥammad al-A'mash Sulaimān ibn Mihrān al-Kūfī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a famous Qur'ān-reader and narrator of Prophetic tradition. He died, ca. A.H. 148.

[182] In the words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), cited on pp. 85–86 above.

> If someone keeps the fast on the first day of the month of Ramaḍān, Allāh will forgive him every sin until the last day of Ramaḍān, and his fasting will be an expiation until that same point in time.

'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh *[yukabbiru]* from the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-ghadāh]* on the Day of 'Arafa until the afternoon prayer *[ṣalāt al-'aṣr]* on the Day of Immolation *[Yaum an-Nahr]*. Such is the doctrine of the Most Splendid Imām, Abū Ḥanifa an-Nu'mān (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him).

Ibn 'Abbās and Zaid ibn Thābit (may Allāh be well pleased with them) used to proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh *[yukabbirān]* from the noon prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]* on the Day of Immolation *[Yaum an-Nahr]* until the afternoon prayer *[ṣalāt al-'aṣr]* on the last of the Days of *Tashrīq*. Such is the practice recommended by 'Aṭā' (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

Among the various accounts of the doctrine of ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the most plausible version states that one should practice the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]* from the the noon prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]* on the Day of Immolation *[Yaum an-Nahr]* until the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]* on the last Day of *Tashrīq*, following the example of the Pilgrim *[Ḥājj]*. This is also the doctrine of Imām Mālik. A third opinion is attributed to ash-Shāfi'ī, to the effect that it should be practiced from the sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]* on the Day of Immolation *[Yaum an-Nahr]* until the daybreak prayer *[ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ]* on the last of the Days of *Tashrīq*.

As for the wording *[lafẓ]* of the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*, Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to pronounce it twice, in this formulation:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*
Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar*
There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu*
and Allāh is Supremely Great!	*wa 'llāhu Akbar*
Allāh is Supremely Great,	*Allāhu Akbaru*
and to Allāh be the praise!	*wa li'llāhi 'l-ḥamd.*

This in keeping with the doctrine of our own Imām, Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal, and that of Abū Ḥanifa (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon them both), as well as that of the people of 'Irāq. As for

Imām Mālik (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him), it is reported that he used to say:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*
Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*

—then he would pause, before going on to say:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*
There is no god but Allāh!	*lā ilāha illa 'llāh.*

Saʿīd ibn Jubair and al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon them both) used to say:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*
Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*
Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*

—three times in a row, then they would continue the *takbīr* to its conclusion, as in the first version mentioned above. This represents the doctrine of ash-Shāfiʿī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) and the people of Medina.

As for Qatāda (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him), it is reported that he used to say:

Allāh is Supremely Great,	*Allāhu Akbaru*
immensely so!	*kabīrā:*
Allāh is Supremely Great,	*Allāhu Akbaru*
for having guided us!	*ʿalā mā hadā-nā.*
Allāh is Supremely Great,	*Allāhu Akbaru*
and to Allāh be the praise!	*wa li'llāhi 'l-ḥamd.*

As reported on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The days of Minā are days of eating and drinking—and the remembrance of Allāh (Exalted is He).

Jaʿfar ibn Muhammad (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "On the Days of *Tashrīq*, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) sent forth a herald to announce: 'These are the days of eating and drinking, and [the union] of spouses *[biʿāl]*.'"

Concerning the case of a Pilgrim who is still in the state of consecration *[muḥrim]*.

If the Pilgrim is still in the state of consecration *[muḥrim]*, he should practice the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]* from the the noon prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]* on the Day of Immolation *[Yaum an-Naḥr]* until the end of the Days of *Tashrīq*. Such is the doctrine of our own Imām, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him). Furthermore, according to the correct version of that same doctrine, he should not practice the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]* unless he has performed the obligatory ritual prayer *[ṣalāt al-farḍ]* in a congregation *[jamā'a]*. He should not practice it if he is by himself [when he performs the obligatory prayer], nor after the supererogatory prayers *[nawāfil]*.

Concerning the practice of *takbīr* [proclaiming the Supreme Greatness of Allāh] on the Festival of Breaking Fast *[ʿĪd al-Fiṭr]*.

This practice of *takbīr* [proclaiming the Supreme Greatness of Allāh], which we have just described in connection with the Festival of the Sacrifice *[ʿĪd al-Aḍhā]*, is likewise appropriate to the Festival of Breaking Fast *[ʿĪd al-Fiṭr]*. As a matter of fact, it is even more firmly established in relation to the breaking of the fast *[al-fiṭr]* on the night preceding the Day of Breaking Fast *[lailat al-Fiṭr]*, on account of the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Allāh desires ease for you,	*yurīdu 'llāhu*
He does not desire hardship for you:	*bi-kumu 'l-yusra*
and [He desires] that	*wa lā yurīdu bi-kumu 'l-ʿusr:*
you should fulfill the number	*wa li-tukmilu 'l-ʿiddata*
[of fasting days]	
and magnify Allāh	*wa li-tukabbirū*
for having guided you:	*'llāha ʿalā mā hadā-kum*
and perhaps you will be thankful.	*wa laʿalla-kum tashkurūn.*
(2:185)	

In this case, the timing is obviously different. It begins after sunset on the night preceding the Day of Breaking Fast *[lailat al-Fiṭr]*, and continues until the moment when the prayer leader *[imām]* concludes his Festival sermon *[khuṭba]*, on the Day of the Festival *[Yaum al-ʿĪd]*. It ends at that point.

According to Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), there is no customary practice of declaring Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr masnūn]* at the Breaking of the Fast *[al-Fiṭr]*.

According to Imām Mālik (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), *takbīr* may be practiced on the Day of Breaking Fast *[Yaum al-Fiṭr]*, but not on the preceding night. He maintained that the time for it lasts until the worshipper reaches the place of prayer *[muṣallā]*, the prayer leader [*imām*] appears on the scene, and the people are ready to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].

According to ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the time for *takbīr* extends from sunset, on the night preceding the Day of Breaking Fast [*lailat al-Fiṭr*], until the moment when the prayer leader [*imām*] concludes his Festival sermon [*khuṭba*], on the Day of the Festival [*Yaum al-'Īd*]. The following statements have also been attributed to him:

- "The time for *takbīr* extends from sunset, on the night preceding the Day of Breaking Fast [*lailat al-Fiṭr*], until the moment when the prayer leader [*imām*] makes his appearance in the place of worship [*muṣallā*]."
- "...until the worshipper enters the state of consecration for the ritual prayer [*yuḥrima bi'ṣ-ṣalāt*]."
- "...until he has duly concluded his performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]."

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The Eleventh Discourse

Concerning the special qualities of the Day of ʿĀshūrā'.

Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

The number of the months	inna ʿiddata 'sh-shuhūri
in the sight of Allāh is twelve months.	ʿinda 'llāhi 'thnā ʿashara shuhūran
[They were already inscribed]	
in the Book of Allāh	fī kitābi 'llāhi
on the day when He created	yauma khalaqa 's-
the heavens and the earth;	samāwāti wa 'l-arḍa
four of them are sacred. (9:36)	min-hā arbaʿatun ḥurum:

We have discussed this earlier in the present work, and we have also mentioned that [the month of] Muharram is one of the four.[397] [As its name implies] this month is one of the months that have been declared sacred *[al-ashhur al-muharrama]* in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He). It includes the day of ʿAshūrā', and Allāh (Exalted is He) enormously enhances the recompense of those who worshipfully obey Him on that day.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr [Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā'],[398] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone observes a day of fasting during Muharram, for every such day he will be credited with thirty days.

According to another traditional report, transmitted by Maimūn ibn Mihrān on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with

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[397] See p. 5 above.

[398] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Mujāhid—Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).**

The following explanations have also been put forward:

- ['Arafa] is derived from *'arf*, meaning that which is pleasantly fragrant *[ṭayyib]*. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

And He will admit them to the Garden,	*wa yudkhilu-humu 'l-jannata*
which He has made for them. (47:6)	*'arrafa-hā la-hum*

—that is to say, He has made it pleasantly fragrant *[ṭayyaba-hā]* for them.

- ['Arafāt] is the opposite of Minā, because Minā is a place in which blood is shed *[yumnā]*, and that is why it is called Minā. Since it contains the droppings and clots of blood [from the sacrificial animals], it is not a pleasant place. 'Arafāt, on the other hand, is not contaminated by such dirt and squalor, and is therefore a pleasant place. That is precisely why it came to be called 'Arafāt, and why the day spent standing there is known as the Day of 'Arafa.
- ['Arafāt is so called] because people become acquainted with one another *[yata'ārafūna]* [during the rite of standing] there.
- These two names ['Arafa and 'Arafāt] have their root in the concept of patience *[ṣabr]*. When a man is said to be *'ārif*, it means that he is patient *[ṣābir]*, self-effacing and humble. In the words of the proverbial saying *[mathal]*: "The soul is very patient *[an-nafs 'arūf]*, and it will bear whatever it has to bear." [The famous poet] Dhu'r-Rumma described someone as being:

> Long-suffering indeed, when destiny's decrees befell him
> *['arūfun lammā ḥaṭṭat 'alai-hi 'l-maqādiru]*.

That is to say, he was extremely patient *[ṣabūr]* in enduring the verdict of Allāh.

According to this last explanation, therefore, the name ['Arafa/'Arafāt] has come to be used in recognition of the modest humility of the Pilgrims *[Ḥujjāj]*, their self-effacement, their patience in supplication *[du'ā']* and in the face of all kinds of tribulation *[balā']*, and their endurance of extreme hardships and difficulties, in order to perform this worshipful service *['ibāda]*.

◆

with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> If someone fasts on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, Allāh will record in his favor the worshipful service [*‘ibāda*] of sixty years devoted to fasting by day and keeping vigil by night. If someone fasts on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, he will be granted the spiritual reward of a thousand martyrs [*shahīd*]. If someone fasts on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, Allāh will record in his credit column the recompense of the inhabitants of the seven heavens.
>
> If someone provides a believer [*mu’min*] with a meal to break his fast on the night of ‘Āshūrā’, it will be just as if the entire Community [*Umma*] of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had broken fast as his guests, and had filled their stomachs to capacity.
>
> If someone strokes the head of an orphan with his hand on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, for every hair on the orphan's head, Allāh (Exalted is He) will promote him by one degree in the Garden of Paradise.

“O Messenger of Allāh,” exclaimed ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him), “Allāh (Exalted is He) has treated us with special favor, by granting us the day of ‘Āshūrā’!” The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then went on to say:

> Allāh (Exalted is He) created the heavens on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, and the earth likewise. He created the mountains on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, and the stars likewise. He created the Heavenly Throne [*‘Arsh*] on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, and the Pedestal [*Kursī*] likewise. He created the Tablet [*Lawh*] on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, and the Pen [*Qalam*] likewise.
>
> He created Gabriel on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, and the angels likewise. He created Adam on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. Abraham [*Ibrāhīm*] was born on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, and Allāh (Exalted is He) delivered him from the fiery furnace on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, then Allāh redeemed his son from being sacrificed on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. He caused Pharaoh to drown on the day of ‘Āshūrā’.
>
> He raised Idris up to heaven on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. He relieved Job [*Ayyūb*] of his agony on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. He raised Jesus [*‘Īsā*] up to heaven on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, and Jesus was born on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. Allāh relented toward Adam on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, and He forgave the sin of David [*Dāwūd*] on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. Allāh granted kingship to Solomon [*Sulaimān*] on the day of ‘Āshūrā’.
>
> The Lord (Blessed and Exalted is He) established Himself upon the Heavenly Throne [*‘Arsh*][400] on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. The Day of Resurrection [*Yaum al-Qiyāma*] will occur on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. The first rain fell from the sky on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. The first gift of mercy [*raḥma*] came down from above on the day of ‘Āshūrā’.
>
> If someone performs the major ritual ablution [*ightasal*] on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, he will never experience any illness, apart from the sickness of death. If

[400] An allusion to Q. 20:5.

> someone anoints his eyelids with antimony [*ithmid*] on the day of 'Āshūrā', he will not suffer inflammation of the eyes throughout the entire course of that year.
>
> If someone pays a visit to a sick person on the day of 'Āshūrā', it is just as if he had visited all the children of Adam. If someone gives [a thirsty person] a drink of water on the day of 'Āshūrā', it is just as if he had never disobeyed Allāh for a single instant.
>
> If someone performs four cycles of ritual prayer [*sallā arba'a raka'āt*] on the day of 'Āshūrā'—reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*], one time, and the Sūra that begins with "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!'],"[401] fifty times—Allāh (Exalted is He) will forgive him the sins of fifty bygone years, and of fifty years that are still in the future. Allāh (Exalted is He) will also build for him, in the midst of the heavenly host [*al-mala' al-a'lā*], a thousand palaces of light.

According to another traditional report [*ḥadīth*], the prescription is as follows:

> [The worshipper should perform] four cycles of ritual prayer [*raka'āt*], with two salutations [*taslīmatain*],[402] reciting in each cycle:
>
> - the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*], one time.
> - the Sūra that begins with "*Idhā zulzilati 'l-arḍu zilzāla-hā* [When the earth is shaken with her quaking],"[403] one time.
> - the Sūra that begins with "*Qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn*... [Say: 'O unbelievers...'],"[404] one time.
> - the Sūra that begins with "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!'],"[405] one time.
>
> Then, when he has concluded his performance of the ritual prayer, he should invoke blessings upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), seventy times.

This has come down to us as part of the body of tradition [*ḥadīth*] reported by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> It was made incumbent upon the Children of Israel [*Banī Isrā'īl*] to fast on one day in the year, namely, the day of 'Āshūrā', the tenth of Muḥarram, so

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[401] Sūra 112.

[402] That is to say, with one salutation [*taslīma*] after the second cycle [*rak'a*], and another after the fourth and last. The term *taslīma* [salutation] is applied to the act of turning the head to the right and saying, "*as-salāmu 'alaikum wa raḥmatu 'llāh* [Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh]," then turning the head to the left and repeating these same words.

[403] That is to say, the Sūra of the Earthquake [*Sūrat az-Zalzal*] (Q 99:1-8).

[404] Sūra 109.

[405] Sūra 112.

Concerning those things which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has called "a remembrance *[dhikr]*" in the Qur'ān.

In the Qur'ān, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has called several things "a remembrance or reminder *[dhikr]*." For instance, He has applied this name to the Torah *[Taurāh]*, for He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And We sent none [as Messengers]	*wa mā arsalnā*
before you, except men to whom	*min qabli-ka*
We conveyed by inspiration:	*illā rijālan nūḥī ilai-him*
"Question the people	*fa-'s'alū ahla 'dh-*
of the Remembrance,	*dhikri*
if it should be that you do not know."	*in kuntum lā ta'lamūn.*
(16:43)	

He has called the Qur'ān a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

This is a blessed Reminder	*wa hādhā dhikrun*
that We have revealed.	*mubārakun anzalnā-h.*
Will you then reject it? (21:50)	*a-fa antum la-hu munkirūn.*

He has called the Well-Kept Tablet *[al-Lauḥ al-Maḥfūẓ]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And We have written in the Psalms,	*wa la-qad katabnā fi 'z-Zabūri*
after the Remembrance:	*min ba'di 'dh-Dhikri*
"The earth shall be the inheritance	*anna 'l-arḍa yarithu-hā*
of My righteous servants." (21:105)	*'ibādiya 's-ṣāliḥūn*

He has called the admonition *[maw'iẓa]* a *dhikr*, in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

So, when they forgot that	*fa-lammā nasū*
of which they had been reminded,	*mā dhukkirū bi-hi*
We opened unto them	*fataḥnā 'alai-him abwāba*
the gates of everything until,	*kulli shai':*
even as they were rejoicing	*ḥattā idhā fariḥū*

has failed to keep in the course of the whole year. And if someone gives a charitable donation on that day, he will thereby make up for any charitable donation *[ṣadaqa]* that he has failed to give in the course of the whole year."

It was Yaḥyā ibn Kathīr[409] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"If someone anoints his eyelids on the day of 'Āshūrā', using a mixture of kohl *[kuḥl]*[410] and musk *[misk]*, he will have no reason to complain of any problem with his eyes until that same day in the year ahead."

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr [Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā'],[411] it was Abū Ghālib ibn Umayya ibn Khalaf al-Jamḥī who said:

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once spotted a sparrow hawk *[ṣurad]*[412] on the roof of my house, so he said:

> "'This is the first bird to keep the fast on the day of 'Āshūrā'.'"

It was Qais ibn 'Ubāda who said: "Even the wild beasts used to fast on the day of 'Āshūrā'."

Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The most meritorious fasting, after the month of Ramaḍān, is [fasting in] the month of Allāh which they call the Sacred Month *[al-Muḥarram]*. And the most meritorious ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*—after that which is prescribed as an obligatory duty *[mafrūḍa]*, and that which is performed in the middle of the night—is the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* of the day of 'Āshūrā'.

'Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh ennoble his countenance) is reported as having stated that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

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[409] Abū Zakariyā' Yaḥyā ibn Hāshim ibn Kathīr ibn Qais al-Ghassānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was an expert in the tradition of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), although some authorities have questioned his reliability. The date of his death has not been recorded, but he is known to have been a student of al-A'mash (d. ca. A.H. 148) and other traditionists of the same period.

[410] Kohl (from the Arabic word *kuḥl*) is a powder, usually a preparation of pulverized antimony, used for darkening the edges of the eyelids.

[411] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, **Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Abū Ghālib ibn Umayya ibn Khalaf al-Jamḥī.**

[412] According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the *ṣurad* is "a certain bird, above the size of the sparrow, having a large head, which preys upon sparrows." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ṣ–R–D*.)

> In Allāh's Sacred Month *[al-Muharram]*, Allāh has relented toward certain people, and He will also relent toward others.

Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone fasts on the last day of Dhu 'l-Hijja and on the first day of Muharram, he will have sealed the old year with fasting, and ushered in the new year with fasting, and Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will grant him the atonement *[kaffāra]* of fifty years.

According to a report from 'Urwa, [the Prophet's wife] 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said:

"'Āshūrā' was observed as a day of fasting by Quraish[413] in the [pre-Islamic] time of ignorance *[al-Jāhiliyya]*. Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) devoted it to fasting, while he was in Mecca, but when he moved to Medina, he made the Fast of Ramaḍān an obligatory religious duty. So, if anyone wishes to do so, he may keep the fast on the day of 'Āshūrā', and if anyone so wishes, he may abstain from observing it."

Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

"When Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) moved to Medina, he discovered that the Jews *[al-Yahūd]* were observing the day of 'Āshūrā' as a day of fasting, so he inquired about that practice of theirs, and they told him: 'This is the day on which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) rendered Moses *[Mūsā]* and the Children of Israel *[Banī Isrā'īl]* victorious over the people of Pharaoh, so we devote it to fasting in his honor.' The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded to this by saying: 'We are more worthy of Moses *[Mūsā]* than you are!' Then he commanded [the Muslims] to observe it as a day of fasting."

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[413] Quraish is the name of the Arab tribe into which the Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was born.

Concerning the origin and significance of the term "'Āshūrā'".

There is a lack of unanimity among the religious scholars [*'ulamā'*] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them), as to why the day of 'Āshūrā' came to be so called. Most of them have maintained that it was named the day of 'Āshūrā' for the simple reason that it is the tenth day [*yaum 'āshir*] of Muharram. According to some of them, however, it came to be called 'Āshūrā' because it is the tenth [*'āshir*] of the tokens of special favor [*karāmāt*] bestowed by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) upon this Community [*Umma*] of ours, namely:

1. The month of Rajab, which is also known as The "Deaf" Month of Allāh [*Shahru'llāh al-Aṣamm*].[414] Allāh (Exalted is He) made Rajab a token of special favor [*karāma*] for this Community [*Umma*] because of its excellence over all the other months, which is like the excellence of this Community over all the other Communities [*Umam*].

2. The month of Sha'bān,[415] the excellence of which, over all the other months, is like the excellence of the Prophet [Muhammad] (Allāh bless him and give him peace) over all the other Prophets [*Anbiyā'*].

3. The month of Ramadān,[416] the excellence of which, over all the other months, is like the excellence of Allāh (Exalted is He) over His creation.

4. The Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*], which is "better than a thousand months."[417]

5. The Day of Breaking the Fast [*Yaum al-Fitr*],[418] which is the day of recompense [*yaum al-jazā'*].

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[414] Or, "The Month of Allāh in which no jarring sounds are to be heard." (See pp. 13–15 above.)

[415] See pp. 54–69 above.

[416] See pp. 70–165 above.

[417] See pp. 100–18 above.

[418] See pp. 146–49 above.

of Egypt, as mentioned by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) in the Sūra of Joseph *[Sūrat Yūsuf]*:

And the king said: "I saw in a dream	*wa qāla 'l-maliku innī arā*
seven fat cows, and seven	*sab'a baqarātin simānin*
lean ones devouring them." (12:43)	*ya'kulu-hunna sab'un 'ijāfun*

"There would be seven years of drought, and then seven years of plenty, according to the prediction made by Joseph *[Yūsuf]* (peace be upon him).

"There are seventeen cycles *[rak'a]*, all told, in the five daily prayers *[ṣalawāt]*.[222]

"The number seven is mentioned in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Then a fast of three days	*fa-ṣiyāmu thalāthati ayyāmin*
while on the Pilgrimage,	*fi 'l-Ḥajji*
and of seven when	*wa sab'atin*
you have returned. (2:196)	*idhā raja'tum.*

"There are seven degrees of relationship by blood *[nasab]* within which it is unlawful to marry.[223]

"There are seven degrees of relationship by fosterage *[riḍā']* and marriage *[ṣihr]*, within which it is likewise unlawful to marry.[224]

"Before they can be considered pure and fit for human use, food containers in which dogs have lapped must be washed and scrubbed seven times, including one scrubbing with dry earth. Such is the rule laid down by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

"There are twenty-seven Arabic 'words' *[ḥurūf]*[225] in the Sūra of Power

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[222] The total of seventeen is arrived at by adding together: (a) the two cycles of the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]*, (b) the four cycles of the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*, (c) the four cycles of the afternoon prayer *[ṣalāt al-'aṣr]*, (d) the three cycles of the sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*, and (e) the four cycles of the late evening prayer *[ṣalāt al-'ishā']*.

[223] As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us in the Qur'ān (4:23):

Forbidden to you are	*ḥurrimat 'alai-kum*
your mothers,	*ummahātu-kum*
and your daughters,	*wa banātu-kum*
and your sisters,	*wa akhawātu-kum*
and your paternal aunts,	*wa 'ammātu-kum*
and your maternal aunts,	*wa khālātu-kum*
and your brother's daughters,	*wa banātu 'l-akhi*
and your sister's daughters	*wa banātu 'l-ukhti*

[224] In this category, it is forbidden for a man to marry: (1) his foster-mother, (2) his foster-sister, (3) his mother-in-law, (4) his daughter-in-law, (5) his stepdaughter, (6) the sister of a wife to whom he is still married, and (7) the widow or divorced wife of his father.

[225] The basic meaning of the term *ḥarf* (of which *ḥurūf* and *aḥruf* are plural forms) is "a letter of the Arabic alphabet." As in this context, however, it may also signify "a connected group of Arabic letters, representing either a separate word, or, in some cases, a grammatical combination of two or more elements, only one of which can normally be written separately."

Friend *[Khalīl]*, and on which He rescued him from Nimrod's fiery furnace.

5. It was on this day that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) relented toward David *[Dāwūd]* (peace be upon him), and that He restored the kingship to Solomon *[Sulaimān]* (peace be upon him).

6. It was on this day that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) relieved Job *[Ayyūb]* (peace be upon him) of his agony.

7. It was on this day that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) rescued Moses *[Mūsā]* (peace be upon him) from the sea, and that He caused Pharaoh to drown in the sea.

8. It was on this day that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) rescued Jonah *[Yūnus]* (peace be upon him) from the belly of the whale.

9. It was on this day that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) raised Jesus *[ʿĪsā]* (peace be upon him) up to heaven.

10. It was on this day that our Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was born.

Concerning various opinions as to which day in Muḥarram is the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ.

There is also a lack of unanimity among the experts as to which day in Muharram is the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ. Most of them have maintained that it is the tenth day of Muharram, and this must be the correct opinion, on the basis of all that has been mentioned above. According to some of them, however, it is the eleventh of Muharram. Others, citing a report from ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), maintain that it is the ninth of that month.

According to one report, al-Ḥakīm ibn al-Aʿraj once asked Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) which day should be observed as the fast of ʿĀshūrāʾ, and he replied: "Once you have sighted the new moon *[hilāl]* of Muḥarram, keep count of the days, then start fasting on the morning of the ninth." "I went on to ask him," said al-Ḥakīm, "if that was how Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to observe it as a day of fasting, and he said: 'Yes.'"

According to another traditional report *[hadīth]*, Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) also used to say: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) kept the fast on the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ, and he instructed [all the members of his Community] to observe it as a day of fasting. 'O Messenger of Allāh,' they exclaimed, 'it is venerated by the Jews *[Yahūd]* and the Christians *[Naṣārā]*!' Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) therefore went on to say:

> "'When the next year comes around, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills, we shall fast on the ninth day [of Muharram].'

"Before the next year came around, however, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had completed his earthly life *[tuwuffiya]*."

In a differently worded version of this report, Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> "'If I survive until next year, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills, I shall fast on the ninth day.'

"[He said this] for fear of missing the day of 'Āshūrā'."

◆

Concerning the martyrdom of al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAli (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him and with his father), who was slain on the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ.

In discussing the special qualities of the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ, we cannot fail to mention that al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with him and with his father) was slain on that day.[424]

Umm Salama[425] (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said:

“Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was once in my apartment, when [his young grandson] al-Ḥusain (may Allāh be well pleased with him) went in to see him. I watched the pair of them from the doorway, and there was al-Ḥusain (may Allāh be well pleased with him), perched on the chest of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as he played a game. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was holding a piece of clay in his hand, and tears were streaming from his eyes.

“As soon as al-Ḥusain (may Allāh be well pleased with him) had left, I went inside and said: ‘Let my father and my mother be your ransom, O Messenger of Allāh! As I was watching you, I noticed that you were holding a piece of clay in your hand, and that you were shedding tears.’ He responded (Allāh bless him and give him peace) by telling me:

> “‘While I was taking great delight in having him perched on my chest, playing his game, Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to me and handed me the piece of clay upon which he will be slain. That is why I was shedding tears.’”

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī[426] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: “Sulaimān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik once saw the

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[424] The year was A.H. 61/680 C.E.

[425] See note 104 on p. 55 above.

[426] See note 74 on p. 40 above.

Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in a dream, giving him good tidings and treating him with kindness.

"When morning came, he asked al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with him) what this could mean, so al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said to him: 'Perhaps you have done a kind favor *[ma'rūf]* to the people of the household of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)?'

"'Yes,' he replied, 'I discovered the head of al-Ḥusain ibn 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) in the treasure house of Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya, so I draped it with five pieces of silk brocade *[dībāj]*. Together with a congregation of my companions, I performed the [funeral] prayer over it *[sallaitu 'alai-hi]*, and then gave it a proper burial.'

"On hearing this, al-Ḥasan (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) said to Sulaimān: 'The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) must surely have been well pleased with you because of that!'

"Sulaimān then treated al-Ḥasan (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) with special favor, and gave orders for him to be provided with rich rewards."

Ḥamza ibn az-Zayyāt is reported as having said: "Once, in a dream, I saw the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and Abraham, the Bosom Friend of Allāh *[Ibrāhīm al-Khalīl]* (peace be upon him), performing the ritual prayer together *[yusalliyāni]* at the grave of al-Ḥusain ibn 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)."

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr [Muhammad ibn al-Bannā'],[427] it was Ja'far ibn Muhammad (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Seventy thousand angels alighted on the grave of al-Ḥusain ibn 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), on the day when he was mortally wounded, and they will continue to weep over him until the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*."

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[427] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Abū Usāma—Ja'far ibn Muhammad** (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

> someone anoints his eyelids with antimony *[kuḥl]* on the day of 'Āshūrā', he will not suffer inflammation of the eyes throughout the entire course of that year.
>
> If someone pays a visit to a sick person on the day of 'Āshūrā', it is just as if he had visited all the children of Adam. If someone gives [a thirsty person] a drink of water on the day of 'Āshūrā', it is just as if he had never disobeyed Allāh for a single instant.
>
> If someone performs four cycles of ritual prayer *[ṣallā arba'a raka'āt]* on the day of 'Āshūrā'—reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]*, one time, and the Sūra that begins with "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!'],"[401] fifty times—Allāh (Exalted is He) will forgive him the sins of fifty bygone years, and of fifty years that are still in the future. Allāh (Exalted is He) will also build for him, in the midst of the heavenly host *[al-mala' al-a'lā]*, a thousand palaces of light.

According to another traditional report *[ḥadīth]*, the prescription is as follows:

> [The worshipper should perform] four cycles of ritual prayer *[raka'āt]*, with two salutations *[taslīmatain]*,[402] reciting in each cycle:
>
> - the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]*, one time.
> - the Sūra that begins with "*Idhā zulzilati 'l-arḍu zilzāla-hā* [When the earth is shaken with her quaking],"[403] one time.
> - the Sūra that begins with "*Qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn*… [Say: 'O unbelievers…'],"[404] one time.
> - the Sūra that begins with "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!'],"[405] one time.
>
> Then, when he has concluded his performance of the ritual prayer, he should invoke blessings upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), seventy times.

This has come down to us as part of the body of tradition *[ḥadīth]* reported by Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> It was made incumbent upon the Children of Israel *[Banī Isrā'īl]* to fast on one day in the year, namely, the day of 'Āshūrā', the tenth of Muḥarram, so

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[401] Sūra 112.

[402] That is to say, with one salutation *[taslīma]* after the second cycle *[rak'a]*, and another after the fourth and last. The term *taslīma* [salutation] is applied to the act of turning the head to the right and saying: "*as-salāmu 'alaikum wa raḥmatu'llāh* [Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh]," then turning the head to the left and repeating these same words.

[403] That is to say, the Sūra of the Earthquake *[Sūrat az-Zalzal]* (Q. 99:1-8).

[404] Sūra 109.

[405] Sūra 112.

If it were permissible to observe the day of his death as the day of tragic loss *[muṣība]*, it would actually make more sense to choose Monday for such observance, since it was on a Monday that Allāh (Exalted is He) took away our Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace). It was likewise on a Monday that Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth *[as-Ṣiddīq]* (may Allāh be well pleased with him), was taken away [by the Lord].

As reported by Hishām ibn 'Urwa, [the Prophet's wife] 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said:

"[My father] Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once asked me: 'On which day of the week did the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) complete his earthly life *[tuwuffiya]*?' 'It was on a Monday,' I replied. He then said (may Allāh be well pleased with him): 'I hope to die on that same day of the week.' And it was in fact on a Monday that he died (may Allāh be well pleased with him)."

The loss of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and the loss of Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) are more prodigious than the loss of anyone else, yet people have agreed on the honorable status of Monday, on the excellent merit of observing it as a day of fasting, and that good deeds performed thereon are presented for review on high. On Thursday, also, the good deeds of the servants [of the Lord] are raised up on high. By the same token, the day of 'Āshūrā' should not be observed as the day of tragic misfortune.

Besides, there are no better grounds for observing the day of 'Āshūrā' as the day of tragic misfortune, than for choosing to observe it as the day of happiness and joy, for all the reasons we have mentioned and discussed above, including:

The fact that Allāh (Exalted is He) delivered his Prophets (peace be upon them) from their enemies on that day.

The fact that, on that day, He destroyed their unbelieving foes, such as Pharaoh and his people, as well as others.

The fact that, on that day, Allāh (Exalted is He) created the heavens and the earth, and all things noble, as well as Adam (peace be upon him) and more besides.

The fact that (Exalted is He) has prepared, for those who devote that day to fasting, a plentiful reward and and an abundant bestowal, the expiation of sins and the purification of bad deeds.

ʿĀshūrā' has thus come to be on a par with the rest of the noble days, such as the Two Festivals *[al-ʿĪdain]*, [Friday] the Day of the Congregation *[al-Jumʿa]*, the Day of ʿArafa, and so on.

Moreover, if it had ever been permissible to observe this day as the day of tragic misfortune, the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* and the Successors *[Tābiʿūn]*[428] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all) would have observed it as such, because they were more closely in touch with it than we are, and better qualified to understand its true significance. In actual fact, as we know from traditional reports about them, they used to urge people to treat their dependents with special generosity on that day, and to observe it as a day of fasting. To cite one example, al-Ḥasan [al-Basri][429] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"Fasting on the day of ʿĀshūrā' is an obligatory religious duty *[farīḍa]*."

[The Caliph] ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to command its observance as a day of fasting. ʿĀ'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once asked some people: "Who commanded you to fast on the day of ʿĀshūrā'?" When they replied: "ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him)," she said: "Of all those [Companions] who are still alive, he has the best knowledge of the Sunna [the exemplary practice of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)]."

ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> "'If someone spends the night of ʿĀshūrā' in vigilant worship, Allāh (Exalted is He) will let him live as long as he wishes.'"

This surely goes to prove the falsehood of the doctrine propounded by the speaker quoted above. Of course, only Allāh (Exalted is He) is All-Knowing *[wa'llāhu—taʿālā—Aʿlam]*.

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[428] In his *Malfūẓāt [Utterances]*, Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) says: "Of them [the people of the Lord] He has made firm anchors for the religion *[dīn]*. The senior rank among them is that of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), junior to this is the rank of the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]*, and below this again is the rank of the Successors *[Tābiʿūn]*. They always put what they say into practice, carrying it out in word and deed, in private and in public." (See page 26 of the Al-Baz edition of this work in English translation.)

[429] See note 74 on p. 40 above.

The Twelfth Discourse

Concerning the special qualities of Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jumʿa]*.

Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

O you who believe! When the call	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanū*
is proclaimed for the prayer	*idhā nūdiya li'ṣ-ṣalāti*
on the Day of Congregation,	*min yawmi 'l-jumuʿati*
hasten to the remembrance of Allāh	*fa-'sʿau ilā dhikri 'llāhi*
and leave buying and selling aside.	*wa dharu 'l-baiʿ:*
That is better for you,	*dhālikum khairun la-kum*
if you did but know. (62:9)	*in kuntum taʿlamūn.*

According to ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), these words should be interpreted as follows:

• O you who believe!	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanū*

—means: "[O you who] have acknowledged and confirmed the truth of the Uniqueness *[Waḥdāniyya]* of Allāh (Exalted is He)."

• When the call is proclaimed for the prayer	*idhā nūdiya li'ṣ-ṣalāti*

—means: "When you are summoned by the call to prayer *[adhān]* on Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jumʿa]*."

• hasten to the remembrance of Allāh	*fa-'sʿau ilā dhikri 'llāhi*

—means: "Walk [briskly] to the congregational prayer *[ṣalāt al-jumʿa]*."

• and leave buying and selling aside.	*wa dharu 'l-baiʿ*

—means: "Refrain from buying and selling after [you hear] the call *[nidā']*."

• That is better for you,	*dhālikum khairun la-kum*

—means: "The ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* is better for you than earning and trading."

• if you did but know.	*in kuntum ta'lamūn.*

—means: "[if you did but] acknowledge the truth."

As for the occasion *[sabab]* of the revelation of this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*, it was sent down in response to the following situation: The Jews *[Yahūd]* were boasting of three things that made them superior to the Muslims, namely:

1. They said: "We, not you, are the friends *[auliyā']* and loved ones *[aḥibbā']* of Allāh."
2. They said: "We have a Book of Scripture *[Kitāb]*, while you have no such Book.
3. They said: "We have a Sabbath *[Sabt]*, while you have no Sabbath of your own."

Allāh therefore refuted them and proved them false, in this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*, for He said to His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Say: "O you who follow Judaism,	*qul yā aiyuha 'lladhīna hādū*
if you claim	*in za'amtum*
that you are the friends of Allāh,	*anna-kum auliyā'u li'llāhi*
apart from the rest of humankind,	*min dūni 'n-nāsi*
then long for death,	*fa-tamannawu 'l-mawta*
if you are telling the truth." (62:6)	*in kuntum ṣādiqīn.*

—meaning: "[if you are telling the truth] when you say: 'We, not you, are the friends *[auliyā']* and loved ones *[aḥibbā']* of Allāh.'"

In order to refute their statement: "You are illiterates *[ummiyyūn]*; you have no Book of Scripture *[Kitāb]*," Allāh (Glorious and Exalted is He) sent down His words:

It is He who has sent	*Huwa 'lladhī ba'atha*
among the unlettered folk	*fi 'l-ummiyyīna*
a Messenger from among themselves,	*Rasūlan min-hum*
to recite to them His signs	*yatlū 'alai-him āyāti-hi*
and to purify them,	*wa yuzakkī-him*
and to teach them the Book	*wa yu'allimu-humu 'l-Kitāba*
and Wisdom, although formerly	*wa 'l-Ḥikma: wa in kānū min qablu*
they were in patent error. (62:2)	*la-fī ḍalālin mubīn:*

He also laid blame on them, for He said (Exalted is He):

The likeness of those who have been	*mathalu 'lladhīna*
loaded with the Torah,	*ḥummilu 't-Taurāta*
but then have not carried it	*thumma lam yaḥmilū-hā*
[into practice], is as the likeness	*ka-mathali 'l-ḥimāri*
of a donkey carrying tomes.	*yaḥmilu asfārā:*
Wretched is the likeness	*bi'sa mathalu 'l-*
of the people who have	*qaumi 'lladhīna*
cried lies to Allāh's signs.	*kadhdhabū bi-āyāti 'llāh:*
And Allāh does not guide	*wa 'llāhu lā yahdi 'l-*
the evildoing folk. (62:5)	*qauma 'ẓ-ẓālimīn:*

In order to refute their statement: "We have a Sabbath *[Sabt]*, while you have no Sabbath of your own," He also sent down (Blessed and Exalted is He):

O you who believe! When the call	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanū*
is proclaimed for the prayer	*idhā nūdiya li'ṣ-ṣalāti*
on the Day of Congregation,	*min yaumi 'l-jumu'ati*
hasten to the remembrance of Allāh	*fa-'s'au ilā dhikri 'llāhi*
and leave buying and selling aside.	*wa dharu 'l-bai':*
That is better for you,	*dhālikum khairun la-kum*
if you did but know. (62:9)	*in kuntum ta'lamūn.*

Then He said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

But when they spy some merchandise	*wa idhā ra'au tijāratan*
or sport, they break away to it	*au lahwani 'nfaḍḍū ilai-hā*
and leave you standing.	*wa tarakū-ka qā'imā:*
Say: "What is with Allāh is better	*qul mā 'inda 'llāhi khairun*
than sport and merchandise."	*mina 'l-lahwi wa mina 't-tijāra:*
And Allāh is the Best of providers. (62:11)	*wa 'llāhu Khairu 'r-rāziqīn.*

This revelation came in response to what used to happen when the caravan *['Īr]* approached the city of Medina, and the townsfolk greeted its arrival with the beating of drums and the clapping of hands, so the people would come out of the mosque *[masjid]*. On one particular day, the caravan arrived and the people came out of the mosque, apart from twelve men and one woman. Then a second caravan arrived, and out they came once again, apart from twelve men and one woman. It was then that Diḥya ibn Khalīfa al-Kalbī, of the tribe of 'Āmir ibn 'Awf, arrived with merchandise from Syria. (This was before he had accepted Islām.) He used to carry with him all sorts of merchandise, and the people of Medina would greet him with the beating of drums and the clapping of hands. On this occasion, his arrival coincided with Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was standing in the pulpit *[minbar]*, delivering a sermon. Most of the people went out to meet him, so the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: "Look and see how many are left in the mosque *[masjid]*." They told him: "Twelve men and one woman," so the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: "Were it not for these few, the stones would have been assigned to them," meaning: "the stones would have been marked for them."

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) therefore sent down the revelation:

But when they spy some merchandise	*wa idhā ra'au tijāratan*
or sport, they break away to it	*au lahwani 'nfaḍḍū ilai-hā*
and leave you standing.	*wa tarakū-ka qā'imā:*

—that is to say, [standing] on the pulpit *[minbar]*.

Say: "What is with Allāh	*qul mā 'inda 'llāhi*
is better than sport	*khairun mina 'l-lahwi*

—meaning: the beating of drums and the clapping of hands.

and merchandise."	*wa mina 't-tijāra:*

—brought by Diḥya.

And Allāh is the Best of providers. (62:11)	*wa 'llāhu Khairu 'r-rāziqīn.*

—Better than any apart from Him.

Included among those who stayed in the mosque, it has been said, were Abū Bakr and 'Umar (may Allāh the Exalted be well pleased with them both).

◆

Concerning what is known about the special qualities of Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jum'a]*, by way of traditional reports *[āthār]*.

There are many traditional reports *[āthār]* concerning the special qualities of Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jum'a]*. According to one of these reports,[430] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The sun has never risen, nor has it ever set, on a day more excellent than Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jum'a]*. There is no earthly creature that is not terrified of the Day of Congregation, apart from 'the two heavyweights *[ath-thaqalān]*,' meaning the jinn and humankind. [On that day] two angels are stationed at every gate of the mosque *[masjid]*. Recording the people one by one, in order of arrival, they make notes that read:
>
> - [The first arrival is] like a man who has sacrificed a she-camel.
> - [The second arrival is] like a man who has sacrificed a cow.
> - [The third arrival is] like a man who has sacrificed a sheep.
> - [The fourth arrival is] like a man who has sacrificed a hen.
> - [The fifth arrival is] like a man who has sacrificed an egg.
>
> —then, when the prayer leader *[imām]* stands ready, the record sheets are folded up.

As reported by Abū Salama, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The best day on which the sun has ever risen is Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jum'a]*. It is the day on which Adam (peace be upon him) was created, on which he was lodged in the Garden of Paradise, and on which he was expelled therefrom. It is also the day on which the Final Hour *[as-Sā'a]* will occur. What is more, it contains an hour so special that, if any true believer *[mu'min]* happens upon it, and asks Allāh (Exalted is He) for something good, at that particular time, He is sure to grant him his request.

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[430] **Author's note:** For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: **al-'Alā' ibn 'Abd ar-Rahmān—his father—Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Abū Salama also stated that ‘Abdu'llāh ibn Salām (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "I have identified that hour. It is the last hour of the daytime, and it is the hour in which Adam (on him be peace) was created. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> The human being is created of haste. *khuliqa 'l-insānu min ‘ajal*
> (21:37)

As reported by ‘Abdu'llāh ibn Mundhir, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum‘a*] is the Chieftain of the Days,[431] and the most important of them in the sight of Allāh. It is even more important, in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He), than the Day of Breaking Fast [*Yaum al-Fitr*]. It has five distinctive features, namely: (1-3) It is the day on which Allāh (Exalted is He) created Adam (peace be upon him), on which he was sent down to the earth, and on which his mortal life was completed. (4) It contains an hour in which, if the servant asks something of his Lord, He is sure to grant him his request, provided that he does not ask for anything unlawful [*harām*]. (5) It is the day on which the Final Hour [*as-Sā‘a*] will occur.
>
> There is not one angel drawn near to the presence of his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), who is not terrified of the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum‘a*]. There is not one heaven, nor any earth, that does not view the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum‘a*] with fearful apprehension.

According to one traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The best day on which the sun has ever risen is Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum‘a*]. It is the day on which Adam (peace be upon him) was created, on which he was admitted into the Garden of Paradise, and on which he was evicted therefrom. It is also the day on which the Final Hour [*as-Sā‘a*] will occur.

According to another traditional report, also transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The day that bears witness [*al-yaum ash-shāhid*] is Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum‘a*], the one that is witnessed [*mashhūd*] is the Day of ‘Arafa, and the one that is promised [*mau‘ūd*] is the Day of Resurrection [*Yaum al-Qiyāma*]. The sun has never risen, nor has it ever set, on a day more excellent than Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum‘a*]. It contains an hour so special that, if any believing servant [*‘abd mu'min*] connects with it, and asks Allāh (Exalted is He) for something good, at that particular time, He is sure to grant him his request. If he seeks refuge with Him from something bad, He is likewise sure to grant him refuge.

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[431] For a lengthy anonymous saying, in which every sentence begins: "The Chieftain [*Sayyid*] of…is…," see pp. 98–99 above.

Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' has informed us[432] that ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said:

"When Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jumʿa]* comes around, the devils *[shayāṭīn]* emerge, carrying their banners with them, as they escort the people to their marketplaces. The angels also emerge, to station themselves at the gates of the mosques *[masājid]*, where they record the people in order of priority: the one who is first to arrive, the one who performs a ritual prayer, the one who follows him, and so on, until the prayer leader *[imām]* appears on the scene.

"Then, if someone stays close to the prayer leader *[imām]*, pays attention, listens carefully, and does not talk, he is credited with two certificates of recompense. If someone stays at a distance from him, but pays attention, listens carefully, and does not talk, he is credited with one certificate of recompense. If someone stays close to the prayer leader *[imām]*, but talks, does not pay attention, and does not listen carefully, he is debited with two certificates of sin. If someone stays at a distance from him, talks, does not pay attention, and does not listen carefully, he is debited with one certificate of sin. If someone just says, "Hush! *[ṣah]*," he has spoken, and no congregational attendance *[jumʿa]* is recorded in favor of anyone who speaks."

ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) then said: "I heard something to this effect from our Prophet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace)."

It is reported that Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> If, on the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jumʿa]*, while the prayer leader *[imām]* is delivering the sermon, you say to your companion: "Listen!"—you have talked.

According to this next report,[433] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jumʿa]*, the angels stand at the gates of the mosques *[masājid]*, recording the people as they arrive, until the prayer leader *[imām]* emerges. As soon as the prayer leader *[imām]* appears on the scene, the record sheets are folded up, and the pens are put away.

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[432] **Author's note**: Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib** (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[433] **Author's note**: For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: **ʿAmr ibn Shuʿaib—his father—his grandfather** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

> The angels will say to one another: "What has prevented So-and-so, and what has prevented So-and-so [from attending today]?" Then they will say: "O Allāh, if he is sick, heal him. If he has gone astray, guide him. If he is away from home, assist him."

Ja'far said: "We heard the following report from Thābit, who said: 'We have been told that Allāh (Exalted is He) has certain angels, who carry with them tablets made of silver and pens made of gold. They use these to record the names of those who perform the ritual prayer [*man ṣallā*] on the night preceding Friday, and on Friday itself, as members of the congregation [*jamā'a*].'"

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā',[434] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone is a believer [*mu'min*] in Allāh (Exalted is He) and the Last Day, he is obliged to attend the congregational prayer [*'alai-hi 'l-jum'a*] on Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum'a*]. The only exceptions are a person who is sick, a traveler, a woman, a youngster, or a slave [*mamlūk*]. If someone feels he can do without it, because of involvement in sport or trade, Allāh (Exalted is He) can do without him, for Allāh is Rich and Praiseworthy [*Ghaniyyun Ḥamīd*].

As reported on the authority of Abu'l-Ja'd aẓ-Ẓuhairī, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone fails to attend the congregational prayer, three times, due to a lack of respect for its importance, Allāh (Exalted is He) will set a seal upon his heart.

Shaikh Abū Naṣr has also informed us[435] that Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say, while on his pulpit:

> O people, you must repent to Allāh (Exalted is He) before you die. You must perform righteous works without delay, before you are too distracted. You must establish the connection between you and your Lord, through frequent remembrance of Him, so that you may prosper. You must make a frequent practice of charitable donation [*ṣadaqa*], both in private and in public, for then you will be recompensed, praised, and provided with sustenance. You must know that

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[434] **Author's note.** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Abu'z-Zubair—Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[435] **Author's note.** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib—Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

> Allāh (Exalted is He) has made the Friday congregational prayer *[al-jumʿa]* incumbent upon you, as an obligatory religious duty that is strictly prescribed *[farīḍa maktūba]*, in this place of mine, in this month of mine, in this year of mine, until the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*.
>
> If someone is capable of finding a way to attend it, yet neglects to do so—during my lifetime or after I am gone, because of rejecting it altogether or regarding it as unimportant, when he has a leader *[imām]*, whether unjust or just, [who is qualified to conduct the congregational prayer]—may Allāh not set his muddled affairs in order, and may He not bless him in his business! May that person have no ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* to his credit! May he have no ritual ablution *[wuḍūʾ]* to his credit! May he have no payment of the alms-due *[zakāt]* to his credit! May he have no Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* to his credit! May he receive no blessing *[baraka]*, unless and until he repents, for if he repents, Allāh will relent toward him.
>
> Ah well, it seems that a woman will not be loyal to a man, an Arab tribesman *[Aʿrābī]* will not be loyal to an emigrant *[muhājir]*, and an immoral type *[fājir]* will not be loyal to a true believer *[muʾmin]*, unless he [or she] is coerced by a ruler *[sulṭān]* whose sword and whose whip inspire fear.

As we are informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā', on good traditional authority,[436] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, Allāh will resurrect the days [of the week] with their peculiar features. When he brings forth Friday, the Day of Congregation *[al-Jumʿa]*, it will be bright and shining. Its people will array themselves around it, as if they were escorting a bride in procession to her noble groom. Thus will it shine upon them, as they bask in its radiance. Their complexions will be like snow, and their perfume like musk. They will plunge into mountains of camphor, while jinn and humankind *[ath-thaqalān]* look on. Before their spectators have time to blink in amazement, they will enter the Garden of Paradise. No one will mingle with them, except the [angelic] announcers *[muʾadhdhinūn]* who are there on duty.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā',[437] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Allāh (Exalted is He) has six hundred thousand souls emancipated from the Fire of Hell, [each hour] throughout the day and the night of every Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jumʿa]*, which consists of twenty-four hours. During

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[436] **Author's note.** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Thābit al-Bannānī—Ṭāwūs—Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[437] **Author's note.** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Thābit al-Bannānī—Anas ibn Mālik** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).**

> each hour, six hundred thousand souls are emancipated from the Fire of Hell, even though all of them have deserved condemnation to the Fire.

In another version of this report, transmitted by Thābit on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), we are told that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) expressed himself as follows:

> In each and every hour, of all the hours of this world, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has six hundred thousand souls emancipated from the Fire of Hell. He emancipates them all, even though they have deserved to be condemned to the Fire of Hell on the Day of Resurrection [*Yaum al-Qiyāma*].
>
> In the course of Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum'a*], and the night thereof, there are twenty-four hours all told. Not one of those hours goes by, without Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) having six hundred thousand souls emancipated from the Fire of Hell. He emancipates them from the Fire of Hell, even though they have all deserved condemnation to the Fire.

As reported by 'Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Abī Lailī, on the authority of Abu'd-Dardā' (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs the ritual prayer of Friday, as a member of the congregation [*jamā'a*], an accepted Pilgrimage [*Hajj*] will be recorded in his favor. If he also performs the afternoon prayer [*al-'asr*], a Visitation ['*Umra*] will be recorded in his favor. If he stays in his place until evening, whatever request he makes, Allāh (Exalted is He) will surely grant it.

As reported on the authority of Abū Umāma al-Bāhilī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone fasts on Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum'a*], performs the ritual prayer together with the prayer leader [*imām*], attends a funeral service [*janāza*], makes a charitable donation [*sadaqa*], visits a sick person, and attends a wedding, the Garden of Paradise will be his by right.

As we are informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā', on good traditional authority,[438] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Three individuals attend the Friday congregational prayer [*al-jum'a*]: (1) a man who is present for some trivial reason, so that will be all he gets from it; (2) a man who is present in order to make a prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*], so he is a man

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[438] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—'Amr ibn Shu'aib—his father—his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

> who appeals to Allāh (Exalted is He), and if He wishes, He will grant his request, and if He wishes, He will withhold it; and (3) a man who is present in a state of silence and attentive listening, a man who would not step over the neck of a Muslim [in the ranks of the congregation], and who would not make himself a nuisance to anyone, so his attendance will count as an expiation [*kaffāra*], valid until the following Friday, plus three extra days, for Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) says:

If someone produces a good deed,	*man jā'a bi'l-hasanati*
he shall have ten just like it	*fa-la-hu 'ashru*
[to his credit]. (6:161)	*amthāli-hā.*

According to one traditional report [*hadīth*], the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> There is not one creature that does not spring to attention on Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum'a*], dreading the advent of the Final Hour [*as-Sā'a*]— apart from the devils [*shayāṭīn*] and the wretched member of the human race [*shaqī Banī Ādam*].

It is said that the birds and the insects meet with one another on Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum'a*], and say: "Peace be upon you! May it be a good day!"

In the words of another traditional report [*khabar*]: "Hell [*Jahannam*] flares up in a blaze, as a daily occurrence, at the moment when the sun remains poised in the center of the sky, just before its decline from the meridian. So you must not perform the ritual prayer at this hour, except on Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum'a*], for the whole of it is a ritual prayer [*salāt*], and that is the one day when Hell [*Jahannam*] does not flare up in a blaze."

More traditional reports on the subject of Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jumʿa]*.

As reported by Abū Ṣāliḥ, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs the major ritual ablution *[ightasala]* on Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jumʿa]*, then sets out [for the mosque] in the first hour, it will be as if he has sacrificed a she-camel. If someone sets out in the second hour, it will be as if he has sacrificed a cow. If someone sets out in the third hour, it will be as if he has sacrificed a horned ram. If someone sets out in the fourth hour, it will be as if he has sacrificed a hen. If someone sets out in the fifth hour, it will be as if he has sacrificed an egg. When the prayer leader *[imām]* arrives on the scene, the angels will be present, to listen to the remembrance [of Allāh].

The first hour comes after the ritual prayer of dawn *[ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ]*. The second hour comes after the rising of the sun, while the third coincides with its full expansion, at the high point of the forenoon *[ḍuḥā]*, when feet are scorched by the blistering heat of the sun. The fourth hour comes before the sun's decline from the meridian, and the fifth when the sun has declined, or at the moment when it stays briefly poised [in the center of the sky].

As reported by Nāfiʿ, on the authority of Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs the major ritual ablution *[ightasala]* on every Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jumʿa]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will rid him of his sins. Then he will be told: "Set to work from a fresh start."

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is also reported as having said:

> If someone does what it takes to make major ablution obligatory *[ghassala]*, and performs the major ritual ablution *[ightasala]*, then makes an early morning start [for the mosque, where he] stays close to the prayer leader *[imām]*, and does not talk—for every step he takes, he will be credited with having devoted one whole year to fasting *[ṣiyām]* and night vigil *[qiyām]*.

In the saying just quoted, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used the verb *ghassala*, with doubling *[tashdīd]* [of the letter "s"], in order to convey the implicit meaning: "If someone does what it takes to make major ablution necessary for his wife *[ghassala ahla-hu]*." In other words, this is an allusion to sexual intercourse *[jimā']*. This explains why, according to the experts in religious knowledge *['ilm]*, it is a recommended practice to have sexual intercourse with one's wife on Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*. On the strength of this saying *[ḥadīth]*, some of our righteous predecessors *[salaf]* did make it their regular practice.

In one traditionally reported version, however, the verb occurs as *ghasala*, with non-doubling *[takhfīf]* [of the letter "s"], in which case the implicit meaning must be: "If someone washes *[ghasala]* his head," or "washes *[ghasala]* his body."

As reported by al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī], on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> O Abū Huraira, you must perform the major ritual ablution every Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*. You would still be obliged to do so, even if, in order to buy the water, you needed to spend the whole of your daily allowance.

By most of the experts in Islāmic jurisprudence *[fuqahā']*, the major ritual ablution *[ghusl]* is classed as a recommended practice *[mustaḥabb]*. In the opinion of Dāwūd, however, it is strictly necessary *[wājib]*, so it must not be omitted by anyone who attends the Friday congregational prayer *[al-jum'a]*. "As for its proper time," he said, "that is after the appearance of the second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]*."[439]

As soon as a person has completed his major ablution, the best course for him is to set out at once for the mosque *[masjid]*, to escape any argument [that might arise in his household], and to guard against any violation of his state of ritual purity, until he performs the Friday congregational prayer *[ḥattā yuṣalliya 'l-jum'a]*.

He should perform the major ablution *[ghusl]* with the conscious intention of serving his Master *[Maulā]*. If the morning finds him in a state of major ritual impurity *[junub]*, and he performs both the minor and the major ablutions *[tawaḍḍa'a wa 'ghtasala]*, with the conscious intention of removing the major impurity *[janāba]* and preparing for the Friday congregational prayer *[al-jum'a]*, this is permissible. To make himself neat and tidy, he should trim his hair and his nails, and apply a deodorant. He should dress in his best and whitest clothes, put a turban on his head, and wear a loose outer garment *[ridā']*, for, according to traditional report *[hadīth]*:

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[439] The second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]* is also known as the true dawn *[al-fajr aṣ-ṣādiq]*.

> The angels invoke blessings upon those who wear turbans on Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*.

He should perfume himself with the most fragrant scent in his possession, choosing one that has a noticeable aroma, but leaves no color stain. When he leaves his house and makes his way to the congregational mosque *[jāmi']*, he should be in a state of calm and quiet dignity, modest, submissive and humble, aware of his spiritual poverty, offering frequent supplications and pleas for forgiveness, and invoking blessings upon Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He should set out with the conscious intention of paying a visit to his Master *[Maulā]* in His house, of drawing near to Allāh (Exalted is He) through the fulfillment of his obligatory religious duties *[farā'id]*, and of remaining in seclusion *['ukūf]* in the mosque *[masjid]*, until the moment when it is appropriate for him to return to his own home. He should make it his conscious intention to keep his limbs and organs from involvement in idle sport and foolish talk, both on the road and in the congregational mosque *[jāmi']*.

On Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, he should forsake his rest and relaxation, and refrain from pursuing his worldly interests, in order to devote the day to litanies *[aurād]* [440] and worship *['ibāda]*. He should therefore treat the first part of his daytime, until the conclusion of the Friday congregational prayer *[al-jum'a]*, as a time for service. Then he should treat the middle of the day, until the afternoon ritual prayer *[salāt al-'asr]*, as a time for the acquisition of religious knowledge *['ilm]*, and participation in the sessions of remembrance *[majālis adh-dhikr]*. He should devote the next period, between the afternoon ritual prayer *[salāt al-'asr]* and the setting of the sun, to the glorification of Allāh *[tasbīh]* [441] and seeking forgiveness *[istighfār]*. At this time, and during every day and night, these are the most excellent expressions of remembrance *[adhkār]* he can utter:

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[440] For an extensive treatment of the subject of litanies *[aurād]* see Vol. 4, pp. 83–109.

[441] The verbal noun *tasbīh* is derived from the three-consonant root *s–b–h*, which occurs in the expression "*subhāna 'llāh* [Glory be to Allāh]!"

There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu*
Alone, without partner.	*Waḥda-hu lā sharīka la-h:*
To Him belongs the sovereignty	*la-hu 'l-mulku*
and to Him belongs the praise.	*wa la-hu 'l-ḥamd:*
He brings to life and causes death,	*yuḥyī wa yumītu*
while He is Ever-Living and never dies.	*wa Huwa Ḥayyun lā yamūt:*
All goodness is in His Hand,	*bi-yadihi 'l-khairu*
and He is Capable of all things.	*wa Huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*

—two hundred times.

Glory be to Allāh, the Almighty,	*subḥāna 'llāhi 'l-'Aẓīmi*
and with His praise!	*wa bi-ḥamdi-hi.*

—one hundred times.

There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu 'l-*
the King, the Evident Truth!	*Maliku 'l-Ḥaqqu 'l-Mubīn.*

—one hundred times.

O Allāh, bless Muhammad,	*Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā*
Your servant and Your Messenger,	*Muḥammadin 'abdi-ka*
the unlettered Prophet!	*wa Rasūli-ka 'n-Nabiyyi 'l-ummī.*

—one hundred times.

I seek forgiveness of Allāh	*astaghfiru 'llāhi 'l-*
the Ever-Living,	*Ḥayyi 'l-*
the Eternally Self-Sustaining,	*Qayyūm.*
and I beg him to accept	*wa as'alu-hu 't-*
my repentance.	*tawba.*

—one hundred times.

What wonders Allāh has willed!	*mā shā'a 'llāh.*
There is no strength but with Allāh.	*lā quwwata illā bi'llāh.*

—one hundred times. That adds up to a total of seven hundred times, including all the various expressions of remembrance *[adhkār]*.

It has been reported, concerning one of the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* (may Allāh be well pleased with them all), that he used to pronounce twelve thousand expressions of glorification *[tasbīḥ]* every single day. It has also been reported, concerning one of the Successors *[Tābi'ūn]*,[442] that he used to pronounce thirty thousand expressions of glorification *[tasbīḥ]* every single day. Everyone knew about his performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* and his practice of glorification *[tasbīḥ]*.

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[442] See note 428 on p. 294 above.

Beware of being one of the deprived, of not remembering and not being remembered. The true believer *[mu'min]* is first of all one who remembers *[dhākir]* Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), then one who is remembered *[madhkūr]* by Him. Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

So remember Me,	*fa-'dhkurū-nī*
and I will remember you.	*adhkur-kum*
Be thankful to Me,	*wa 'shkurū lī*
and be not ungrateful toward Me.	*wa lā takfurūn.*
(2:152)	

As for the time before the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, one practice that is not recommended is that of listening to the public storyteller *[qāṣṣ]*, because the public telling of tales *[quṣaṣ]* is an innovation *[bid'a]*. Ibn 'Umar was one of those among the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* (may Allāh be well pleased with them all) who used to evict the public storytellers from the congregational mosque *[jāmi']*.

O Allāh! This does not apply to one who is truly acquainted *['ālim]* with Allāh (Exalted is He), being one of the people of intimate knowledge and certainty *[ahl al-ma'rifa wa 'l-yaqīn]*. Attendance at his session *[majlis]* is more meritorious than performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, in light of the saying *[ḥadīth]* of Abū Dharr (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "Attendance at the session of real knowledge *[majlis al-'ilm]* is more meritorious than performing a thousand cycles of ritual prayer *[ṣalāt alf rak'a]*."

When the late arrival enters the congregational mosque *[jāmi']*, he must not step over the necks of the people [already assembled in rows], unless he is a prayer leader *[imām]* or a muezzin *[mu'adhdhin]*, because it is reported that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to a man, whom he had seen stepping over the necks of the assembled people: "O So-and-so, what kept you from performing the Friday congregational prayer *[al-jum'a]* together with the rest of us?" The man said: "Did you not see me, O Messenger of Allāh?" So he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "I saw you loitering about, and making a nuisance of yourself!" In other words, the man was being told: "You came as a very late arrival, and then made your presence felt in a most annoying manner."

According to another version of this traditional report *[ḥadīth]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: "What kept you today from joining the congregation?" The man replied: "O Prophet of Allāh, I did join the congregation!" So then he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "Did I not see you stepping over the necks of the people?"

If someone behaves like that, it has been said, he will be placed as a bridge on the surface of Hell *[Jahannam]*, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*, and the people will use him to step across.

You must also refrain from passing directly in front of a worshipper engaged in the ritual prayer *[muṣallī]*, because we are told in a traditional report *[khabar]*: "If one of you has to stand waiting for a year, that is better for him than passing directly in front of a worshipper engaged in the ritual prayer *[muṣallī]*." In another version, the wording is: "That a man should turn to ashes, scattered by the winds, that would be better for him than passing directly in front of a worshipper engaged in the ritual prayer *[muṣallī]*."

You must not get someone to move from his spot, and then sit in his place, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> Let it not happen that one of you gets his brother to move from the place where he is sitting, and then sits in it himself!

If a man got up to offer his seat to Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), he would not sit down until the man had returned to his place.

What if someone notices a gap in the ranks, several rows in front of him? Is it permissible from him to step over the necks of the people, in order to sit in that space? On this point, according to our own Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him), there are two conflicting traditional reports.

If someone arrives before a friend of his, and sits in a place to keep it for him, it is permissible for him to sit there. But what if he spreads something belonging to him on the floor? May someone else pick it up and sit in its place? There are two views on this point, according to our [Ḥanbalī] colleagues.

A member of the congregation should make the effort to find a spot close to the prayer leader *[imām]*, then listen attentively to the sermon *[khuṭba]*, without speaking to anyone. If he does speak, he is guilty of a sin, according to one of two conflicting reports. He is not forbidden to speak before the commencement of the sermon, nor after its conclusion.

Still more traditional reports on the subject of Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā',[443] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Gabriel *[Jibrīl]* (peace be upon him) came to me, holding in his hand some white mushrooms *[kam'a]*, on which there was a black spot. I said: "What is this, O Gabriel?" He told me: "This is [the Day of] Congregation *[al-Jum'a]*. It contains much that is good for you." I said: "And what is this black spot?" He said: "This is the Final Hour *[as-Sā'a]*. It will come about on the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, which happens to be the Chieftain of the Days *[Sayyid al-Ayyām]*.[444] Among ourselves, we [angels] call it the Day of Extra Benefit *[Yaum al-Mazīd]*." I said: "And why do you call it the Day of Extra Benefit *[Yaum al-Mazīd]*, O Gabriel?"
>
> He explained: "That is because your Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) has chosen for Himself a valley in the Garden of Paradise, where the scent is more fragrant than that of white musk. On the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, rather than any of the other days, the All-Compelling One *[al-Jabbār]* (Blessed and Exalted is He) will descend from His Heavenly Throne *['Arsh]* to His Pedestal *[Kursī]*, into this valley. The Pedestal is rimmed with pulpits of light, on which the Prophets *[Nabiyyūn]* are seated. Those pulpits are rimmed with pedestals of gold, crowned with jewels, upon which are seated the champions of truth *[siddīqūn]* and the martyrs *[shuhadā']*.
>
> Then the inhabitants of the upper chambers [of Paradise] will come forth, until they are surrounded by the sand dunes [of the valley], and Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will say: "I am the One who fulfilled My promise to you, and completed My bestowal of grace upon you, and conferred My honor upon you." Then He will go on to say: "So put your requests to Me," and they will all say, in chorus: "We ask You to grant us Your approval."

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[443] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Abu'l-Qāsim 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Umar al-Faqīh ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him)—Habīb ibn al-Hasan al-Qazzāz—Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Khurāsānī—Abū Ayyūb Sulaimān ibn 'Abd ar-Rahmān ad-Dimashqī—Muhammad ibn Shu'aib—'Umar ibn 'Abdi'llāh (the freedman *[maulā]* of 'Afra)—Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[444] See n. 431 on p. 300 above.

> To this He will reply: "You have My approval. I shall admit you to My abode, and I shall treat you to My noble generosity." Then He will say again: "Put your requests to Me," and again they will say: "Our Lord, we ask You for approval." He will then keep saying: "Put your requests to Me," and they will keep asking him, until the wish of every servant amongst them has been fulfilled. At that point they will say: "That is all we need, our Lord!" He will then reveal to them, at the appointed time of their departure from the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jumʿa]*, that which no eye has ever seen, of which no ear has ever heard, and the very notion of which has never occurred to any human heart.
>
> The inhabitants of the upper chambers *[ahl al-ghuraf]* will thus return to their chambers. Each chamber is made of a white pearl, a red ruby, and a green chrysolite, in which there is neither crack nor blemish. Streams flow through them without interruption. Their fruits hang down within easy reach, and inside those chambers are their wives, their servants, and their living quarters. Nothing is more necessary to them, therefore, than the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jumʿa]*, in order to increase their enjoyment of gracious favor from their Lord, and His good pleasure *[riḍwān]*.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā',[445] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> When the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jumʿa]* comes around, Allāh's trusted agent, Gabriel *[Amīnu'llāh Jibrīl]* (peace be upon him), goes early in the morning to the Sacred Mosque *[al-Masjid al-Ḥarām]*, where he sets up his standard. The other angels go early in the morning to all the mosques *[masājid]* in which the local congregations gather. They erect their flagpoles and their banners at the gates of the mosques, then they spread out sheets of silver and pens of gold, and set about recording the names of those who come early to attend the congregational prayer *[jumʿa]*, noting the first arrival, then the next.... As soon as seventy early arrivals have entered every mosque, the record sheets are folded up. Those seventy, who came early to attend the congregational prayer *[jumʿa]*, will be honored like those whom Moses chose:

And Moses chose of his people seventy men. (7:155)	*wa 'khtāra Mūsā qauma-hu* *sabʿīna rajulan*.

> (Those of his people whom Moses *[Mūsā]* chose were all Prophets *[Anbiyā']*.) Then the angels insert themselves into the rows [formed by the worshippers], where they scrutinize the men [to see who is present and who is missing]. One of them will say the others: "What has happened to So-and-so?" When they tell him: "He has died," they will all say: "May Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him, for he was a regular member of the congregation *[ṣāḥib jumʿa]*."

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[445] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Ḥāfiẓ—Abū ʿAlī Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad aṣ-Ṣawwāf—Abu'l-ʿAbbās Abdu'llāh ibn Asghar—Isḥāq ibn Ibrāhīm Abū Ṣāliḥ al-Jazzār—ʿAmr ibn Shams—Saʿd ibn Ṭarīf al-Iskāf—al-Aṣbagh ibn Nabbāta—ʿAlī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Then some of them will ask: "What has happened to So-and-so?" If the answer is: "He is away from home," they will all say: "May Allāh keep him safe, for he was a regular member of the congregation." Then some of them will ask: "What has happened to So-and-so?" If the answer is: "He has fallen sick," they will all say: "May Allāh soon restore him to good health, for he was a regular member of the congregation."

Concerning one very special hour that occurs on every Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jumʿa]*.

On Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jumʿa]*, there is an hour so special that, if any servant [of the Lord] connects with it, and appeals to Allāh (Exalted is He) at that particular time, his supplication *[daʿwa]* is bound to receive a positive response.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā',[446] it was Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who related the following experience:

"I once traveled to Mount Sinai *[aṭ-Ṭūr]*, and there I came across [the Jewish scholar] Kaʿb [al-Ahbār]. I told him about the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and he told me about the Torah *[Taurāh]*. We found nothing over which to disagree, until we reached the point where I mentioned a particular saying *[hadīth]*, and quoted the words of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> On Friday, the Day of Congregation *[al-Jumʿa]*, there is an hour so special that, if any true believer *[muʾmin]* connects with it, performs a ritual prayer *[yusallī]*, and asks Allāh (Exalted is He) for something good, at that particular time, He is sure to grant him his request.

"On hearing this, Kaʿb said: 'In every year [there is one such hour].' So I insisted: 'No, on every Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jumʿa]*. That is what the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us.' Kaʿb went off somewhere for a little while, then he came back and said: 'You have told the truth, by Allāh! It is indeed on every Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jumʿa]*, just as Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said. As a matter of fact, that day is the

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[446] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Ahmad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm—Abū Salama—Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

Chieftain of the Days *[Sayyid al-Ayyām]*,[447] and the dearest of them all to Allāh (Exalted is He). It is the day on which Adam (peace be upon him) was created, on which he was lodged in the Garden of Paradise, and on which he was expelled therefrom. It is also the day on which the Final Hour *[as-Sā'a]* will occur. There is not one earthly creature that does not make sounds of alarm, as it waits to see what will happen on Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, apart from 'the two heavyweights *[ath-thaqalain]*' [human beings and the jinn].'

"I then returned home, where I met up with 'Abdu'llāh ibn Salām (may Allāh be well pleased with him), so I told him my story. I had just begun to relate my conversation with Ka'b, when 'Abdu'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him) remarked: 'Ka'b did not tell the truth. It is just as Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said, and it is also in the Torah *[Taurāh]*.' 'Well,' said I, 'he did come back [and admit that he had been wrong].'

"'Abdu'llāh ibn Salām (may Allāh be well pleased with him) then told me: 'I happen to know that very hour,' so I asked: 'Which hour is it, exactly?' When he replied: 'The last hour of daytime on the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*,' I said: 'How can that be? I distinctly heard the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say: 'If any true believer *[mu'min]* performs a ritual prayer *[yuṣallī]*...,' and that [last hour of daytime] is not a time of ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.' He countered my objection by saying: 'Surely you must have heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> If someone waits expectantly for [the proper time to perform] an obligatory ritual prayer *[ṣalāt farḍ]*, he is actually in a state of prayer *[fī ṣalāt]*.

"'Yes, of course,' said I. 'Well then,' said he, 'that is how it is [in the case of the special hour].'"

In one version *[lafẓ]* of this report, transmitted on the authority of Muhammad ibn Sīrīn, the wording attributed to Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is as follows: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On Friday, the Day of Congregation *[al-Jum'a]*, there is an hour so special that, if any believing servant *['abd mu'min]* connects with it, and asks Allāh (Exalted is He) for something good, at that particular time, He is sure to grant him his request.

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[447] See n. 431 on p. 300 above.

—and [when he said 'connects with it'] he made a gesture with his hand, as if picking up something he had suddenly noticed on the ground."

One of our righteous predecessors *[salaf]* is reported as having said: "Allāh has a superabundant supply of sustenance, over and above the provisions allotted to His servants, and He gives from that superabundance, but only to those who beseech Him on the evening of Thursday *['ashiyyat al-Khamīs]*, and on Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*."

As we are informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā', on good traditional authority,[448] when Fātima (may Allāh be well pleased with her) heard her father, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), say:

> On Friday, the Day of Congregation *[al-Jum'a]*, there is an hour so special that, if any Muslim servant [of the Lord] connects with it, and asks Allāh (Exalted is He) for something good, at that particular time, He is sure to grant him his request.

—she said: "O my father, which hour is it?" He said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "When half of the sun has sunk below the horizon." So, whenever the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]* came around, Fātima (may Allāh be well pleased with her) would summon a servant of hers, a man called Zaid, and tell him: "Climb up onto the rocky knolls, and call out to let me know when half of the sun has sunk below the horizon." Up he would climb, and when that moment arrived, he would call out to let her know. She would then get up and enter the mosque *[masjid]*, where she would stay until the sun set, and perform the ritual prayer *[tusallī]*.

According to one traditional report *[hadīth]*,[449] when Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> On Friday, the Day of Congregation *[al-Jum'a]*, there is an hour of the daytime when, if any servant [of the Lord] asks something of Allāh, He is sure to grant him his request.

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[448] **Author's note**: Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Sa'īd ibn Rashīd—Zaid ibn 'Alī—Marjāna—Fātima (may Allāh be well pleased with her) the daughter of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)—her father (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[449] **Author's note**: For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: Kathīr ibn 'Abdi'llāh al-Mazanī—his father—his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

—he was asked (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "And which hour is it, O Messenger of Allāh?" To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> From the moment when the ritual prayer is about to be performed [*tuqāmu 's-ṣalāt*], until the point of departure from it [after its completion].

Kathīr ibn 'Abdi'llāh al-Mazani remarked: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was referring specifically to Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum'a*]."[450]

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā',[451] Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was heard to say: "When this invocation [*du'ā'*] was presented to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) for his consideration, he said:

> If someone pronounced this invocation, during the [special] hour of the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum'a*], when appealing for anything between the East and the West, that person would surely receive a positive response:

Glory be to You!	*subḥāna-ka*
There is no god but You,	*lā ilāha illā Anta*
O Tenderly Loving One,	*yā Ḥannānu*
O Generous Benefactor,	*yā Mannān:*
O Originator of the heavens	*yā Badī'a 's-samāwāti*
and the earth,	*wa 'arḍ:*
O Possessor of Majesty and Honor!	*yā Dha 'l-Jalāli wa 'l-Ikrām.*

Ṣafwān ibn Salīm once said: "I have been told that, if someone says:

There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu*
Alone, without partner.	*Waḥda-hu lā sharīka la-h:*
To Him belongs the sovereignty	*la-hu 'l-mulku*
and to Him belongs the praise.	*wa la-hu 'l-ḥamd:*
He brings to life and causes death,	*yuḥyī wa yumīt:*
and He is Capable of all things.	*wa Huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*

—at the moment when the prayer leader [*imām*] sits down in the pulpit [*minbar*] on the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum'a*], he will be granted forgiveness."

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[450] This comment may seem redundant, but in Arabic, as Kathīr was undoubtedly well aware, *al-jum'a* can sometimes mean "the week," whereas *Yaum al-Jum'a* can only mean "Friday, the Day of Congregation."

[451] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā', citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir—Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

It was al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said: "I once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> "'The superior excellence of the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum'a*] during Ramaḍān, over all the other days, is like the superior excellence of Ramaḍān over all the other months.'"

◆

Concerning the invocation of blessing on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) on Friday, the Day of Congregation *[al-Jumʿa]*.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā',[452] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Invoke blessings upon me, many times over, on the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, for it is the day on which good deeds are multiplied, and ask Allāh to grant me the degree of intimate access *[ad-darajat al-wasīla]*.

"O Messenger of Allāh," his listeners asked him, "which level of the Garden of Paradise is the degree of intimate access?" He replied: "It is the highest level in the Garden of Paradise. None but a Prophet *[Nabī]* can attain to it, and I hope to be the one who does!"

According to another traditional report,[453] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone says, on hearing the call *[nidā']* [to the congregational prayer]:

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
Lord of this perfect invitation	*Rabba hādhihi 'd-da'wati 't-tāmma:*
and of the prayer	*wa 'ṣ-ṣalāti 'l-*
that is about to begin,	*qā'ima:*
grant Muḥammad	*āti Muḥammadani 'l-*
the means of access,	*wasīlata*
and excellent merit,	*wa 'l-faḍīlata*
and the lofty degree,	*wa 'd-darajata 'r-rafī'a:*
and confer on him	*wa 'b'ath-hu*
a praiseworthy station,	*maqāman*
which You have promised him.	*maḥmūdani 'lladhī wa'adta-h.*

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[452] ***Author's note.*** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his own father, **Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'**, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[453] ***Author's note.*** For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: **Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir—Jābir** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

> —intercession *[shafā'a]* will be permissible for him on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*.

As traditionally reported, 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> Invoke frequent blessings upon your Prophet, during the illustrious night *[al-lailat al-gharrā']* and the shining day *[al-yaum al-azhar]*, [meaning] the night preceding the Congregation, and the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*.

As reported on the authority of 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Ṣuhaib, it was Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "I was standing before Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), when he said:

> "'If someone invokes blessing upon me, eighty times on each Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant him forgiveness for the sins of eighty years.'

"'O Messenger of Allāh,' said I: 'How should blessing be invoked upon you *[kaifa 'ṣ-ṣalātu 'alai-k]*?' He thereupon explained (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> 'You must say:

O Allāh, bless Muhammad, Your servant and Your Messenger, the unlettered Prophet.	*Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muhammadin* *'abdi-ka wa Rasūli-ka 'n-* *Nabiyyi 'l-ummī.*

> —and bend one [finger].'"[454]

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is also reported[455] as having said:

> Invoke frequent blessings upon me, on the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*. The blessings invoked by the members of my Community *[Ummatī]* will be presented to me for review, on every Day of Congregation, and whoever invokes them most frequently will hold the position closest to me on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*.

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[454] That is to say: "Bend one finger each time you pronounce the invocation of blessing, as a way of keeping count."

[455] **Author's note**. For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: **Makḥūl ash-Shāmī—Abū Umāma** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

According to the same traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then went on to say:

> Throughout the entire month [of Ramaḍān], the Lord (Exalted is the Mention of His Name) will go on issuing this call: "My servants, men and women alike! Be of good cheer, be patient, and steadily persevere! I am about to grant you relief from trouble and pain, and you will shortly attain to My mercy and My generous favor."
>
> As soon as the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* has arrived, Gabriel (peace be upon him) will descend in the midst of a throng of angels. As they alight, they will pronounce benedictions upon every servant [of the Lord], who, whether standing erect or sitting down, is diligently engaged in the remembrance of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

According to another traditional report, also transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If Allāh were ever to allow the heavens and the earth to speak, they would surely greet those who keep the fast of Ramaḍān, hailing them with glad tidings of the Garden of Paradise.

According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted from 'Abdu'llāh ibn Abī Awfā (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The sleep of one who keeps the fast is an act of worshipful service *['ibāda]*, his silence is a declaration of the glory of the Lord *[tasbīḥ]*,[180] his prayer of supplication *[du'ā']* is sure to be accepted, and the merit of every good deed he performs is sure to be multiplied.

According to al-A'mash,[181] Abū Khaithama (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "They used to say: 'Ramaḍān in the case of Ramaḍān, the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* in the case of the Pilgrimage, the Day of Congregation *[Jum'a]* in the case of the Day of Congregation, and the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* in the case of the ritual prayer. These are sufficient in themselves as expiations *[kaffārāt]* for sins committed during their observance,[182] so long as the major sins *[kabā'ir]* are avoided.'"

As we learn from traditional reports, the Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Mu'minīn]*, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased

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[180] In other words, his silence is actually proclaiming: "*subḥāna'llāh* [Glory be to Allāh]!" (The term *tasbīḥ* is a verbal noun, derived from the same root—*s-b-ḥ*—as the word *subḥān*.)

[181] Abū Muḥammad al-A'mash Sulaimān ibn Mihrān al-Kūfī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a famous Qur'ān-reader and narrator of Prophetic tradition. He died, ca. A.H. 148.

[182] In the words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), cited on pp. 85–86 above:

> If someone keeps the fast on the first day of the month of Ramaḍān, Allāh will forgive him every sin until the last day of Ramaḍān, and his fasting will be an expiation until that same point in time.

Differences of opinion concerning how and why the Day of *Tarwiyya* came to be so called.

The religious scholars have held various opinions concerning how at why this day came to be called the Day of *Tarwiyya*. [What is beyond dispute is that] *Tarwiyya* is the name of the eighth day of the month of Dhu 'l-Ḥijja, and it is the day on which the people [who are performing the Pilgrimage] depart from Mecca in the direction of [the nearby valley of] Minā.

Some say it was called *Tarwiyya* because it is the day when people supply themselves with water from the well of Zamzam [in preparation for the journey to Minā]. From the standpoint of Arabic linguistics, *tarwiyya* is a verbal noun, formed on the pattern called *taf'ila*, and derived from the same root, *r–w–y*, as the verb *irtawā*. The expression "*irtawā*" is a concise way of saying that the subject of the verb "drew water from a source, scooped it up, drank some of it, and used some of it to bathe himself." On that day, people do indeed scoop water from the well of Zamzam, frequently and in considerable quantities.

Others have said: "It came to be called [the Day of] *Tarwiyya* because of the dream that Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) experienced during the night thereof, in which he saw that he was going to sacrifice his son. When the morning came, he pondered *[tarawwā]* and reflected, asking himself whether it had come from the Enemy, Satan *[ash-Shaiṭān]*, or from the Friend, the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]*. He spent the rest of that day thinking about what he had seen, and then, when the Day of 'Arafa came around, he was told: 'You must do what you are commanded to do.' He recognized and understood *['arafa]* that it came from the Friend *[Ḥabīb]*, and this is how the Day of 'Arafa acquired its name."

[Yaum al-Jum'a]. If this is too much for him, he may perform part of it during the preceding night. As for the concluding segment of his complete recital *[khatma]*, his best course is to recite it during the [first] two [of the three] cycles of the sunset prayer *[rak'atayi 'l-maghrib]*, or the two cycles of the daybreak prayer *[rak'atayi 'l-fajr]*. There is likewise great merit in concluding the complete recital *[khatma]* between the call to prayer *[adhān]* and the *iqāma* [announcement that prayer is about to begin], on the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*. If one recites [the Sūra that begins with]:

> Say: "He is Allāh, One!" (112:1) *qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad.*

—a thousand times, that is even more meritorious than a complete recital *[khatma]* of the Qur'ān.

The worshipper is also recommended to invoke blessings upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), one thousand times, on the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*. The glorification of Allāh *[tasbīḥ]*, one thousand times, is likewise recommended. This should include the four declarations previously mentioned, namely:

• Glory be to Allāh!	*subḥāna 'llāh.*
• Praise be to Allāh!	*al-ḥamdu li'llāh.*
• There is no god but Allāh!	*lā ilāha illa 'llāh.*
• Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*

◆

Concerning the reason why Friday came to be called the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jum'a]*.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā',[466] it was Salmān [al-Fārisī] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once asked me: 'Do you know why it [Friday] came to be called the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jum'a]*?' I said, 'No,' so he told me: 'Because your father Adam was put together *[jumi'a]* on that day.' Then he went on to say:

> "'If a man purifies himself on the Day of Congregation *[Yawm al-Jum'a]*, by performing the minor ritual ablution *[wuḍū']*, and performing it really well, and if he then attends the congregational prayer, he will certainly be granted remission *[kuffira la-hu]* of any sins he may commit between that Friday and the next, so long as he steers clear of major sins *[kabā'ir]*.'"

Some of the experts have said: "The name is derived from *ijtimā'* [conjunction; joining together], with specific reference to the joining together of Adam's bodily form *[qālab]* and his spirit *[rūḥ]*, after he had been discarded for forty years."

Others have said: "[It acquired its name] on account of the reunion *[ijtimā']* of Adam and Eve *[Ḥawwā']*, after their long separation."

The following explanations have also been put forward:

- "It came to be so called because of the gathering together *[ijtimā']*, on that day, of the townsfolk and the rustics from the surrounding countryside *[rasātīq]*."
- "[It acquired its name] because it is the day on which the Resurrection *[Qiyāma]* will occur, and that will be the Day of the Assembly *[Yawm al-Jam']*. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

On the day when He shall gather you for the Day of the Assembly. (64:9)"	*yawma yajma'u-kum* *li-Yawmi 'l-Jam'i.*

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[466] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his own father, **Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'**, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **Salmān [al-Fārisī]** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the **Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Indispensable Virtues

Concerning the vital importance of (1) repentance *[tawba]*, (2) sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*, and (3) the abandonment of hypocritical display *[riyā']*.

Of all the religious observances and acts of worship that we have already discussed, such as fasting *[ṣiyām]* in certain months, the offering of animal sacrifice *[udhiyya]*, the performance of ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, practices of divine remembrance *[adhkār]*, and so on—as well as those we shall be discussing later, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills—none will be accepted except after repentance *[tawba]*, purity of heart, sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* to working for the sake of Allāh (Exalted is He), and the abandonment of hypocritical display *[riyā']* and the effort to gain a reputation *[sum'a]*.

1. Concerning the necessity of repentance *[tawba]*.

As far as repentance is concerned, we have already provided a full account of the subject.[467] At this point, in order to emphasize its importance, we shall simply add the following remarks:

Allāh loves those who repent *[at-tawwābīn]*, and He loves every heart that is pure and free from sins, for He has told us (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Truly Allāh loves those who turn	*inna 'llāha*
[to Him] in repentance,	*yuḥibbu 't-tawwābīna*
and He loves those	*wa yuḥibbu 'l-*
who keep themselves in purity.	*mutaṭahhirīn.*
(2:222)	

'Aṭā', Muqātil and al-Kalbī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them) have all told us:

"Allāh loves those who turn in repentance from sins, and those who use water to purify themselves of traces of excrement *[aḥdāth]*, menstrual discharge *[maḥīḍ]*, seminal fluids *[janābāt]*, and other causes of defilement *[najāsāt]*. This is explained in the story of the people of Qubā', of whom Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has made mention in His words (Exalted is He):

In it [in Qubā'] there are men who love	*fī-hi rijālun yuḥibbūna*
to purify themselves, and Allāh loves	*an yataṭahharū*
those who purify themselves. (9:108)	*wa 'llāhu yuḥibbu 'l-muṭṭahhirīn*

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) asked them about what they did [to make themselves clean], so they told him: 'We apply

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[467] Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has devoted the Third Discourse of the present work (Vol. 2, pp. 47–103) to a profound commentary on the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And repent unto Allāh all together,	*wa tūbū ilā 'llāhi jamī'an*
O believers, for then	*ayyuha 'l-mu'minūna*
you may be able to succeed. (24:31)	*la'alla-kum tufliḥūn.*

water after the [rubbing with] stones in the process of *istinjā'* [removal of impurities following acts of excretion].'"

It was Mujāhid[468] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Allāh (Exalted is He) loves those who repent their sins, and those who keep themselves pure by abstaining from anal intercourse with women. If a man penetrates the anus of a women, he cannot be one of those who keep themselves pure, because the anus of a woman is similar to that of a man."

It has also been said:

"[Allāh (Exalted is He) loves] those who repent their sins, and those who keep themselves pure of *shirk* [associating partners with Him]."

Abu 'l-Minhāl (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"On one occasion, while I was in the presence of Abu 'l-'Āliya, he performed a ritual ablution *[tawaḍḍa'a wuḍū'an]* in splendid fashion, so I said to him: 'Allāh loves those who turn in repentance from sins, and those who purify themselves!' To this he replied: 'Physical cleanliness is very important. Physical cleanliness is beautiful indeed, but they [the ones whom Allāh loves] are those who purify themselves of sins.'"

Sa'īd ibn Jubair [ibn Hishām al-Asadī][469] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"Allāh (Exalted is He) loves those who turn in repentance from *shirk* [associating partners with Him], and those who purify themselves of sins."

There are many other sayings on this subject, including the following:

"Allāh (Exalted is He) loves those who turn in repentance from unbelief *[kufr]*, and those who purify themselves through faith *[īmān]*."

"Those who turn from sins in repentance do not repeat them, and those who have kept themselves pure of them have not committed them."

"Allāh (Exalted is He) loves those who turn in repentance from major sins *[kabā'ir]*, and those who keep themselves pure of minor sins *[ṣaghā'ir]*."[470]

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[468] See note 135 on p. 76 above.

[469] Abu 'Abdi'llāh [or Abu Muhammad] Sa'īd ibn Jubair ibn Hishām al-Asadī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), a pious *Tābi'ī* [member of the generation following that of the Companions], renowned for his learning in Qur'ānic exegesis *[tafsīr]*, Prophetic tradition *[ḥadīth]* and Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]*. He was killed by Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf in A.H. 95.

[470] See Vol. 2, pp. 108–28.

leader *[imām]* appears on the scene, and the people are ready to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

According to ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the time for *takbīr* extends from sunset, on the night preceding the Day of Breaking Fast *[lailat al-Fiṭr]*, until the moment when the prayer leader *[imām]* concludes his Festival sermon *[khuṭba]*, on the Day of the Festival *[Yaum al-'Īd]*. The following statements have also been attributed to him:

- "The time for *takbīr* extends from sunset, on the night preceding the Day of Breaking Fast *[lailat al-Fiṭr]*, until the moment when the prayer leader *[imām]* makes his appearance in the place of worship *[muṣallā]*."
- "...until the worshipper enters the state of consecration for the ritual prayer *[yuḥrima bi'ṣ-ṣalāt]*."
- "...until he has duly concluded his performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*."

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2.
Concerning the significance of sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*.

As for the significance of sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

And they have been commanded	*wa mā umirū illā li-ya'budu 'llāha*
only to serve Allāh,	*mukhliṣīna*
making the religion His sincerely,	*la-hu 'd-dīn:*
as men of pure faith. (98:5)	*ḥunafā'a.*

He has told us (Glorious and Exalted is He):

Surely pure religion is only for Allāh. (39:3)[472]	*a-lā li'llāhi 'd-dīnu 'l-khāliṣ.*

He has said (Exalted is He):

Their flesh and blood	*lan yanāla 'llāha luḥūmu-hā*
do not reach Allāh, yet your	*wa lā dimā'u-hā wa lākin*
devotion reaches Him. (22:37)	*yanālu-hu 't-taqwā min-kum.*

He has also told us (Magnificent is His Majesty):

Say [to the people of the Scripture]:	*qul a-tuḥājjūna-nā*
"Do you dispute with us	*fi 'llāhi*
concerning Allāh,	*wa Huwa Rabbu-nā*
when He is our Lord and your Lord?"	*wa Rabbu-kum.*
Ours are our works	*wa la-nā a'mālu-nā*
and yours are your works,	*wa la-kum a'mālu-kum:*
and we are sincerely devoted to Him. (2:139)	*wa naḥnu la-hu mukhliṣūn*

People have held differing opinions with regard to the meaning of sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*. For instance, it was al-Ḥasan [al-Basri][473] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

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[472] This verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān continues:

And those who choose protecting friends	*wa 'lladhīna 'ttakhadhū min dūni-hi*
apart from Him (say): "We only serve them	*awliyā'a mā na'budu-hum*
so that they may bring us	*illā li-yuqarribū-nā*
close in nearness to Allāh" (39:3)	*ila 'llāhi zulfā.*

[473] See note 74 on p. 40 above.

"I asked Ḥudhaifa[474] (may Allāh be well pleased with him): 'What is meant by sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*?' He replied: 'I once asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "What is meant by sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*?" He replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'I once asked Gabriel (peace be upon him): "What is meant by sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*?"' He replied: "I once asked the Lord of Might and Glory *[Rabb al-'Izza]* (Majestic and Exalted is He): 'What is meant by sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*?' So He told me (Glory be to Him and Exalted is He): 'It is a secret, a part of My secret knowledge *[sirr min Sirrī]*, which I entrust to the heart of anyone I love among My servants.'"'"'"

According to a report from Idrīs al-Khawlānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> For every truth *[ḥaqq]* there is a real meaning *[ḥaqīqa]* to be experienced, and a servant [of the Lord] will not experience the real meaning of sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*, until he no longer likes to be praised for any work he performs for the sake of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

It was Sa'īd ibn Jubair [ibn Hishām al-Asadī][475] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "The meaning of sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* is that the servant [of the Lord] devotes his religion sincerely to Allāh, that he puts it into practice for the sake of Allāh (Exalted is He), that he attributes no partner to Him in his religion, and that he does not seek to impress anyone with his religious practice."

It was al-Fuḍail [ibn 'Iyāḍ at-Tālaqānī][476] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "To neglect one's religious practice for the sake of other people is a form of hypocrisy *[riyā']*. To perform one's religious practice for the sake of other people is a form of polytheistic idolatry *[shirk]*. As for sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*, it is being afraid that Allāh (Exalted is He) might chastise you for either of these two offenses."

[474] See note 87 on p. 44 above.

[475] See note 409 on p. 328 above.

[476] Abū 'Alī al-Fuḍail ibn 'Iyāḍ at-Tālaqānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) died in Mecca in A.H. 187/803 C.E. Born in Khurāsān, he is said to have been a highwayman at the beginning of his career. After his conversion he went to Kūfa, where he studied under Sufyān ath-Thawrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) and achieved considerable repute as an authority on the Traditions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He is famous for his bold preaching before the Caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd, who called him "the Prince of the Muslims."

It was Yaḥyā ibn Mu'ādh [ar-Rāzī][477] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* means keeping one's religious practice uncontaminated by imperfections, as in the process of milking a ruminant, when the milk must be preserved from contamination by the animal's droppings and blood."

It was Abu 'l-Ḥusain al-Būshanjī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* is so subtle that the two [recording] angels do not take note of it, the devil *[shaiṭān]* cannot corrupt it, and one's fellow human being is quite unaware of it."

Ruwaim (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "Sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* means removing one's admiring gaze from the action performed."

Other noteworthy sayings include the following:

"Sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* is that which is intended to serve the truth *[ḥaqq]*, and which is pursued for the sake of honesty *[ṣidq]*."

"Sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* is that which is neither mixed with corrupting influences, nor dependent on the concessions offered by convenient interpretations *[rukhaṣ at-ta'wīlāt]*."

"Sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* is that which is concealed from creatures *[khalā'iq]* and kept free from attachments *['alā'iq]*."

It was Ḥudhaifa al-Mar'ashī who said: "Sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* means that the actions of the servant [of the Lord] are of the same quality on the outside *[ẓāhir]* and the inside *[bāṭin]*."

It was Abū Ya'qūb al-Makfūf who said: "Sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* means that a person keeps his good deeds hidden, just as he conceals his bad deeds."

Sahl ibn Abdi'llāh [at-Tustarī][478] once said: "Sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* is bankruptcy *[iflāṣ]*."

According to a traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> There are three habits, by conforming to which the heart of a Muslim will not be invaded by rancor, malevolence, malice or spite. They are: (1) working for

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[477] Abū Zakariyā' Yaḥyā ibn Mu'ādh ar-Rāzī (may Allāh bestow his mercy upon him) was a disciple of Ibn Karrām. After leaving his native town of Rayy, he lived for a time in Balkh, then moved to Nīshāpūr where he died in A.H. 258/871 C.E. He is credited with the authorship of a certain number of poems.

[478] Abū Muḥammad Sahl ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn Yūnus at-Tustarī was a Sunnī theologian and mystic, born at Tustar (al-Ahwāz) in A.H. 203/818 C.E. and died in exile at Basra in A.H. 283/896 C.E.

the sake of Allāh with sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*], (2) giving honest counsel [*munāṣaḥa*] to those in positions of authority, and (3) keeping closely in touch with the community [*jamā'a*] of the Muslims.

The following anonymous sayings also deserve to be quoted:

"Sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*] is single-minded dedication to the Truth [*Ḥaqq*] in the practice of worshipful obedience [*ṭā'a*]. It means that the servant practices his worshipful obedience for the purpose of drawing near to his Master [*Maulā*], to the exclusion of any of His creatures. It means that he does not behave in an artificial manner, designed to impress his fellow creatures, to win their praise, to attract their love, and to shield himself against their blame and criticism."

"Sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*] means keeping one's conduct free from the meddling influence of other creatures."

It was Dhu 'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī[479] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*] does not become complete, unless it is tested by truthfulness [*ṣidq*] and practiced with patience [*ṣabr*]. Nor does truthfulness [*ṣidq*] become complete, unless it is pursued with sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*] and practiced with constant perseverance [*mudāwama*]."

Abū Ya'qūb as-Sūsī had this to say on the subject: "Whenever people are sure that they can see a sincere devotion in their sincere devotion [*fī ikhlāṣi-him ikhlāṣan*], their 'sincere devotion' is badly in need of a dose of sincere devotion!"

Dhu 'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "There are three reliable symptoms of sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*], namely: (1) equal indifference to praise and blame from the common folk, (2) a lack of interest in the impression made by good deeds, and (3) regarding the reward for religious practice as a matter to be decided in the hereafter, [not in this world]."

He also said (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "Sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*] is that which is safe from being corrupted by the Enemy [Satan]."

It was Abū 'Uthmān al-Maghribī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*] is that in which the lower self [*nafs*] has no share whatsoever. That is the sincere devotion of the ordinary folk [*ikhlāṣ al-'awāmm*]. As for the sincere devotion of the élite

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[479] See note 37 on p. 25 above.

[ikhlāṣ al-khawāṣṣ], that is something that happens to them, not because of them."

It was Abū Bakr ad-Daqqāq[480] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "The shortcoming of everyone who tries to be sincere *[mukhliṣ]* in his sincere devotion, is the tendency to admire his sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*. If Allāh (Exalted is He) wishes to purify his sincere devotion *[an yukhalliṣa ikhlāṣa-hu]*, He will therefore rid his sincerity of that tendency to admire his sincere devotion, so he will then be a *mukhallaṣ* [one who has been made sincere through purification], rather than a *mukhliṣ* [one who tries to be sincere]."

Sahl [ibn Abdi'llāh at-Tustarī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "No one can see through hypocritical display *[riyā']*, apart from one who is sincere *[mukhliṣ]*."

It was Abū Sa'īd al-Kharrāz[481] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "The pretentiousness of those who know by direct experience *[riyā' al-'ārifīn]* is worth more than the sincere devotion of the novices *[ikhlāṣ al-murīdīn]*."

Abū 'Uthmān [al-Maghribī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) also said: "Sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* means forgetting to notice one's fellow creatures *[khalq]*, through paying constant attention to the Creator *[Khāliq]*."

One of the wise once said:

"Sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]* is that by which the truth *[ḥaqq]* is sought, and which is pursued for the sake of honesty *[ṣidq]*."

It was Sarī as-Saqaṭī[482] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "If someone tries to impress other people, by flaunting something he does not have within him, he will fall from grace in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He)."

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[480] Abū 'Alī ad-Daqqāq (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the founder of a spiritual center in Nishapur, called Khānaqāh-i Sarāwī. He died in A.H. 405/1014 C.E. One of his pupils, Abū Sa'īd ibn Abi 'l-Khair of Maihana in Khurāsān, was a man of great saintliness who met and corresponded with the master-philosopher Avicenna [Ibn Sīnā]. Another was Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Qushairī, the author of an important and frequently quoted treatise entitled *ar-Risālat al-Qushairiyya*.

[481] Abū Sa'īd Aḥmad ibn 'Īsā al-Kharrāz al-Baghdādī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a cobbler by trade. He met Dhu 'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī, and became a companion of Bishr al-Ḥāfī and Sarī as-Saqaṭī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them). The author of several books, some of which have survived to this day, he is credited with having formulated the mystical doctrine of *fanā'* [becoming extinct to the realm of creation] and *baqā'* [existing in perpetuity in the presence of Allāh]. While the date of his death is uncertain, it probably occurred between A.H. 279/892 C.E. and A.H. 286/899 C.E.

[482] Abu'l-Ḥasan Sarī ibn al-Mughallis as-Saqaṭī was the uncle and teacher of al-Junaid. Having begun his career in Baghdād as a dealer in secondhand goods, he became a pupil of Ma'rūf [illegible]. He died in A.H. 253/867 C.E., at the age of 98.

It was al-Junaid[683] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*] is a secret between Allāh (Exalted is He) and the servant [of the Lord]. No angel is privy to it, to be able to record it, nor any devil [*shaiṭān*], to be able to corrupt it, and no passionate desire, to be able to distort it."

Ruwaim (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "Sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*], in religious work, is that for which its practitioner seeks no recompense in either of the two Abodes [*ad-Dārain*], nor any share in the two Domains [*al-Mulkain*]."

When someone asked [Sahl] ibn 'Abdi'llāh [at-Tustarī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "What is the hardest thing for the lower self [*nafs*] to bear?" he replied: "Sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*], because it has no share therein."

To quote another anonymous saying: "Sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*] means that you invite no one, apart from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) to notice your religious practice."

The following incidents were reported by one of the righteous, who said: "I paid a visit to Sahl ibn 'Abdi'llāh [at-Tustarī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), one Friday before the congregational prayer [*ṣalāt*]. I spotted a snake in the house, so I started taking one step forward and another step back, but he said: 'Come on in! No one attains to the reality of faith [*ḥaqīqat al-īmān*], as long as there is anything, on the face of the earth, of which he is still afraid.' Then he went on to say: 'Are you thinking of attending the congregational prayer [*ṣalāt al-jum'a*]?' 'Hardly,' said I, 'since it would take a day and a night to travel the distance between here and the mosque [*masjid*].' So he took me by the hand, and it seemed like no time at all before I could see the mosque. We went inside and performed the congregational prayer [*ṣallaina 'l-jum'a*], then we came outside again. Sahl stood and watched the people as they emerged, then he said: 'Many are those who repeat the words: "There is no god but Allāh *[lā ilāha illa 'llāh]*," but few of them are sincere *[mukhliṣīn]*.'

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[683] Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Junaid ibn Muhammad al-Khazzāz al-Qawārīrī an-Nihāwandī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the son of a glass-merchant. He was a nephew of Sarī as-Saqaṭī, and became a close associate of al-Muḥāsibī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them). Renowned for the clarity of his perception and the firmness of his self-control, he earned a reputation as the principal exponent of the "sober" school of Islāmic mysticism. His *Rasā'il* [Epistles] consist of letters to private individuals, and short tractates on mystical themes, some cast in the form of commentaries on Qur'ānic texts. He died in A.H. 298/910 C.E.

"On another occasion, when I was with Ibrāhīm al-Khawwāṣ[484] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) on a journey, we came to a place in which there were many snakes. He laid his water-flask *[rakwa]* on the ground, and sat down, so I sat down too. Then, when the night turned cool, and the air grew cold, out came the snakes. I yelled at the Shaikh in alarm, but he said: 'Just remember Allāh (Exalted is He),' so I remembered Him, and the snakes recoiled. But then they came back again, so I yelled at the Shaikh, and he gave me the same advice as before. I found myself in that same situation, right through to the break of day. Then, when the dawn had arrived, he stood up and started walking, so I walked along with him. Suddenly, out of the seat of his pants, there fell a huge serpent, which had gathered itself into a coil. 'Did you not feel it?' I asked, but he said: 'No, it has been a long time since I spent a night as pleasant as this last one.'"

It was Abū 'Uthmān [al-Maghribī] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "If a person has never tasted the lonely isolation of heedlessness *[waḥsat al-ghafla]*, he will never discover the sweet taste of the intimate friendship of remembrance *[uns adh-dhikr]*."

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[484] Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm ibn Aḥmad al-Khawwāṣ of Samarra (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), a contemporary of al-Junaid and an-Nūrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them), was known as the Chief of the Trustful *[Sayyid al-Mutawakkilīn]*. He died at Rayy in A.H. 291/904 C.E.

3.

Concerning the necessity to be constantly on guard against hypocritical display *[riyā']*, the desire to impress one's fellow creatures *[ru'yat al-khalq]*, and vain conceit *['ujb]*.

It is most important for every devout worshipper *[muta'abbid]* and truly experienced believer *['ārif]* to be constantly on guard, in all his conditions and circumstances, against hypocritical display *[riyā']*, the desire to impress his fellow creatures *[ru'yat al-khalq]*, and vain conceit *['ujb]*. This is because the lower self *[nafs]* is malign. It is the source of misleading desires, pernicious appetites, and lustful passions that form a barrier between the servant and the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He). There is no road to safety from its wicked and mischievous ways, as long as the spirit *[rūḥ]* resides within the body of a human being *[ibn Ādam]*.

This is still the case, even if the servant [of the Lord] attains to the state of Spiritual Deputyship *[Badaliyya]*[485] and Championship of the Truth *[Ṣiddīqiyya]*, although this state is safer than the initial stage of spiritual development, and more secure from the wickedness and the cunning wiles of the lower self *[nafs]*. In this state, the good is more predominant, the light is more prevalent, the guidance is positively in the direction of Allāh's path *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*, the enabling grace *[tawfīq]* is comprehensive, and the needed protection is always available. Impeccable virtue *['iṣma]* is not for us, however. That is a quality peculiar to the Prophets *[Anbiyā']* (peace be upon them all),[486] conferred on them in order to draw the distinction between Prophetship *[Nubuwwa]* and saintship *[wilāya]*.

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[485] See Vol. 2, note 254, p. 175.

[486] According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, *'iṣmatu 'l-anbiyā'* signifies Allāh's preservation of the Prophets, first by the peculiar endowment of them with essential purity of constitution, then, by the conferring of large and highly-esteemed excellences, then, by aid against opponents, and rendering their feet firm, then, by sending down upon them tranquillity [*as-sakīna*: see Q. 9:26] and the preservation of their hearts, and adaptation to that which is right. (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. '–Ṣ–M.)

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has issued a warning threat to those who practice hypocritical display *[riyā']* and seek to promote an undeserved reputation *[sum'a]*. He has cautioned us against the wicked inclination of the lower self *[nafs]* and its mischievous tricks. He has forbidden us to follow its dictates, and He has instructed us to oppose and contradict it, sometimes in the Qur'an, and at other times in the utterances of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), which are recorded in the traditional reports *[akhbār]* and enshrined in the Sunna.[487] Let us first consider some examples from the Qur'ān [and other Scriptures]:

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

So woe to those who pray,	*fa-wailun li'l-muṣallīn:*
but are heedless of their prayers,	*alladhīna hum 'an ṣalāti-him sāhūn:*
and to those who make a show,	*alladhīna hum yurā'ūna*
yet withhold the smallest charity.	*wa yamna'ūna 'l-mā'ūn.*
(107:4,5)	

He has said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

They utter with their mouths	*yaqūlūna bi-afwāhi-him*
what is not in their hearts	*mā laisa fī qulūbi-him:*
Allāh is best aware of what they hide.	*wa 'llāhu a'lamu bi-mā yaktumūn.*
(3:167)	

He has said (Exalted is He):

The hypocrites seek	*inna 'l-munāfiqīna*
to beguile Allāh	*yukhādi'ūna 'llāha*
but it is He who beguiles them.	*wa Huwa khādi'u-hum:*
When they stand up	*wa idhā qāmū ila 'ṣ-*
to perform the prayer,	*ṣalāti qāmū*
they perform it languidly	*kusālā yurā'ūna 'n-*
and to impress people, and	*nāsa*
they are mindful of Allāh but little.	*wa lā yadhkurūna 'llāha illā qalīlā.*
[They are] swaying	*mudhabdhabīna*
between this [and that],	*baina dhālik*
belonging neither	*lā ilā hā'ulā'i*

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[487] The Sunna is the customary practice established by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). The term *sunna* (of which *sunan* is the plural form) may be applied to a particular practice recommended by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as well as to his exemplary conduct in general. Although there are no capital letters in the Arabic script, it is convenient to mark the distinction, in transliteration, between the specific *sunna/sunan* and the general Sunna.

to these nor to those.	*wa lā ilā hā'ulā':*
If Allāh causes someone to go astray,	*wa man yuḍlili 'llāhu*
you will not find a way for him.	*fa-lan tajida la-hu sabīlā.*
(4:142,143)	

He has said (Exalted is He):

O you who believe,	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna*
many of the [Jewish] rabbis	*āmanū inna kathīran*
and the [Christian] monks	*mina 'l-aḥbāri wa 'r-ruhbāni*
devour the wealth	*la-ya'kulūna*
of mankind wantonly,	*amwāla 'n-nāsi*
and debar [men]	*bi-'l-bāṭili*
from the way of Allāh. (9:34)	*wa yaṣuddūna 'an sabīli 'llāh.*

He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

O you who believe, why do you say	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanū*
that which you do not do?	*li-ma taqūlūna mā lā taf'alūn:*
It is most hateful in the sight of Allāh	*kabura maqtan 'inda 'llāhi*
that you say what you do not do.	*an taqūlū mā lā taf'alūn.*
(61:2)	

He has said (Exalted is He):

Keep your words private	*wa asirrū qawla-kum*
or speak openly;	*awi 'jharū bi-h:*
He knows what the breasts contain.	*inna-hu 'Alīmun bi-dhāti 'ṣ-ṣudūr.*
(67:13)	

He has said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

So whoever hopes	*fa-man kāna*
for the meeting with his Lord,	*yarjū liqā'a Rabbi-hi*
let him do righteous work,	*fa-'l-ya'mal 'amalan ṣāliḥan*
and let him give no one	*wa lā*
any share at all	*yushrik*
in the worship due unto his Lord.	*bi-'ibādati Rabbi-hi aḥadā.*
(18:110)	

He has said (Exalted is He):

Surely the self is always inciting to evil,	*inna 'n-nafsa la-ammāratun*
except inasmuch as my Lord has mercy.	*bi's-sū'i illā mā raḥima Rabbī.*
(12:53)	

He has said (Exalted is He):

But greed has been made present	*wa uḥḍirati 'l-anfusu 'sh-*
in the souls [of men]. (4:128)	*shuḥḥ.*

He said (Almighty and Glorious is He) to David *[Dāwūd]* (peace be upon him) [in a non-Qur'ānic utterance]:

> O David, you must flee from your passionate desire *[hawā]*, for no contender challenges Me for My dominion, apart from passionate desire.

He has also said (Exalted is He):

Do not follow passionate desire, lest it	*wa lā tattabi'i 'l-hawā*
lead you astray from Allāh's path.	*fa-yuḍilla-ka 'an sabīli 'llāh.*
(38:26)	

As for the Sunna,[488] Shaddād ibn Aws (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "I once entered the presence of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and I noticed a look in his face that made me shudder, so I said: 'What is the matter with you, O Messenger of Allāh?' He replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'I am afraid that my Community *[Ummatī]* may be guilty of *shirk* [attributing partners to Allāh], after I am gone.'

"On hearing this, I exclaimed: 'Do you really mean to say, O Messenger of Allāh, that they will attribute partners to Him *[yushrikūna]* after you are gone?' So he went on to explain (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'They may not worship a sun, or a moon, or a graven image *[wathan]*, or a stone idol, but they will resort to hypocritical display in their religious practices *[a'māl]*, and hypocritical display *[riyā']* is tantamount to *shirk* [attributing partners to Allāh].'

"Then he recited the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

So whoever hopes	*fa-man kāna*
for the meeting with his Lord,	*yarjū liqā'a Rabbi-hi*
let him do righteous work, and let him	*fa-'l-ya'mal 'amalan ṣāliḥan*
give no one any share at all	*wa lā yushrik*
in the worship due unto his Lord.	*bi-'ibādati Rabbi-hi aḥadā.*
(18:110)"	

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]* will come with sealed scrolls *[suḥuf makhtūma]* [in which the deeds of mankind have been recorded], so Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will say to the angels: "Throw this one away, and accept this one." They will respond by saying: "By Your Might and Your Majesty, we know nothing but good." So He will say (Exalted is He): "Yes, but this is [the record of] a deed performed for someone other than Me, and I only accept what was done for the sake of My countenance."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to say, in his prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*:

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[488] See n. 487 on p. 338 above.

> O Allāh, make my tongue pure and free from lying, my heart from hypocrisy *[nifāq]*, my religious practice from hypocritical display *[riyā']*, and my eyesight from treachery, for You know the treachery of the eyes, and what the breasts conceal.[489]

He once said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> You must not sit at the feet of a religious scholar *['ālim]*, unless he summons you away from five toward five, namely: (1) away from indulgence *[raghba]*, in the direction of abstinence *[zuhd]*, (2) away from hypocritical display *[riyā']*, in the direction of sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*, (3) away from arrogant pride *[kibr]*, in the direction of modest humility *[tawāḍu']*, (4) away from fawning flattery *[mudāhana]*, in the direction of honest advice *[munāṣaḥa]*, and (5) away from ignorance *[jahl]*, in the direction of knowledge *['ilm]*.

He once said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Allāh (Exalted is He) says:[490] "I am the Best Partner *[Ana Khairu Sharīk]*. If someone associates a partner with Me, in his undertaking, it involves the partner ascribed to Me *[sharīkī]* and has nothing to do with Me. I accept only that which is devoted solely to Me. O Children of Adam, I am the Best Participant *[Ana Khairu Qasīm]*, so reconsider that work of yours, which you have performed for someone other than Me, because your wage is incumbent only on the one for whom you did the work."

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> You may congratulate this Community *[Umma]* on their brilliance and high standing in the sphere of religion, and on their empowerment in the countries of the earth, so long as they do not perform the work of the hereafter for the sake of this world. If anyone does the work of the hereafter for the sake of this world, it will not be accepted of him, and in the hereafter he will have no share.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Allāh will surely grant the benefits of this world [for work performed] with the intention of gaining the benefits of the hereafter, but He will not grant the benefits of the hereafter [for work performed] with the intention of gaining the benefits of this world.

As reported on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On the night when I was taken on my Heavenly Journey *[usriya bī]*, I passed by a group of people whose lips had been snipped by scissors of fire. "Who are these?" I said to Gabriel (peace be upon him), so he told me: "They are the preachers *[khuṭabā']* of your Community. They say something, but they do not

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[489] This is an allusion to the Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*:

He knows the treachery of the eyes, and what the breasts conceal. (40:19)	*ya'lamu khā'inata 'l-a'yuni* *wa mā tukhfi 'ṣ-ṣudūr.*

[490] This is a non-Qur'ānic Divine Saying *[Ḥadīth Qudsī]*.

> put it into practice. They say what they acknowledge as being correct, but they do what they denounce as being wrong. They instruct the people to act righteously, but they forget to include themselves.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The worst of my fears for my Community [*Ummati*] is every hypocrite [*munāfiq*] with a clever tongue. By the One who holds my soul in His hand, the Final Hour will not come about until they find themselves subject to dishonest rulers, immoral ministers, treacherous assistants, iniquitous professors [*'urafā'*], dissolute Qur'ān-reciters [*qurrā'*], and ignorant servants. Allāh (Exalted is He) will expose them to dark and murky intrigue, so they will experience a bewildering perplexity [*tahawwuk*], like that which afflicted the wrongdoing Jews [*Yahūd*]. From that point on, Islām will unravel, knot by knot, until no one says: "Allāh, Allāh!"

As reported on the authority of 'Adī ibn Ḥātim (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On the Day of Resurrection [*Yaum al-Qiyāma*], certain people will be subjected to exemplary punishment of the most extreme kind. Allāh (Exalted is He) will say to them: "When you were in private situations, you would brazenly affront Me with heinous sins [*'aẓā'im*], but when you met with other people, you would approach them modestly and humbly. You were in awe of other people, but you did not regard Me with awe. You honored other people, but you did not honor Me. By My Might, I shall make you taste the most painful chastisement."

According to a traditional report, Usāma ibn Zaid (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> A man will be cast into the Fire of Hell, so his guts will soon be dangling out of his belly. He will be rotated as a mill is rotated by its owner, and he will be asked: "Were you not in the habit of enjoining that which is right and fair [*ma'rūf*], and forbidding that which is wrong and unfair [*munkar*]?" To this he will reply: "I used to enjoin what is right and fair [*ma'rūf*], though I did not practice it myself, and I used to forbid is wrong and unfair [*munkar*], though I did not abstain from it myself."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Many a keeper of the fast [*ṣā'im*] receives nothing from his fasting [*ṣiyām*] but hunger and thirst, and many a keeper of night vigil [*qā'im*] receives nothing from his vigil [*qiyām*] but insomnia.

To this the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) added:

> The Heavenly Throne [*'Arsh*] trembles because of that, and the Lord (Blessed and Exalted is He) is angry with him.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> What a bad servant [of the Lord] is a servant who erects a barrier between himself and the spiritual reward of Allāh (Exalted is He)! I am speaking of a servant, one of the creatures of Allāh (Exalted is He), who devotes himself to His service, in the hope of receiving what He has at His disposal, and who exhausts his physical body in the effort to obtain His approval, but who makes a public show of his religious devotion *[dīn]*, which is thereby rendered invalid.
>
> His manly virtue *[murū'a]* degenerates into vice, and so he erects a barrier between himself and his Lord. He pins his hopes on Allāh (Exalted is He), as far as the big picture is concerned, but he pins them on his fellow servant, when it comes to the small details. He gives some of his service to his fellow servant, at the expense of his worshipful obedience *[ṭā'a]* to Allāh (Exalted is He).

Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "A man once came to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, I make it my practice to give charitable donations *[atasaddaqu bi-ṣadaqa]*, so that I may obtain the gracious favor of Allāh (Exalted is He). I also like to hear people speaking well of me.' At that very moment, His words (Blessed and Exalted is He):

So whoever hopes	*fa-man kāna*
for the meeting with his Lord,	*yarjū liqā'a Rabbi-hi*
let him do righteous work,	*fa-'l-ya'mal 'amalan ṣāliḥan*
and let him give no one	*wa lā yushrik*
any share at all in the worship	*bi-'ibādati*
due unto his Lord. (18:110)	*Rabbi-hi aḥadā.*

—were sent down [to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)]."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The end of the age will see the emergence of groups of people who exploit religion *[dīn]* for worldly purposes. To impress other people, they will dress in sheep's clothing, and their tongues will be sweeter than sugar, though their hearts are the hearts of wolves. Allāh (Exalted is He) will say: "Are you deluding yourselves about Me, or are you so bold as to challenge Me deliberately?" I swear by Me, I shall surely inflict such confusion upon those people, that you would call the mildest case a case of utter bewilderment."

As we learn from a traditional report,[491] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The angels will carry aloft the work of a certain servant from among the servants

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[491] **Author's note**: For this traditional report, the chain of transmission goes back through the following links: **Ḍamra—Abū Ḥabīb** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

on them in order to draw the distinction between Prophetship *[Nubuwwa]* and saintship *[wilāya]*.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has issued a warning threat to those who practice hypocritical display *[riyā']* and seek to promote an undeserved reputation *[sum'a]*. He has cautioned us against the wicked inclination of the lower self *[nafs]* and its mischievous tricks. He has forbidden us to follow its dictates, and He has instructed us to oppose and contradict it, sometimes in the Qur'ān, and at other times in the utterances of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), which are recorded in the traditional reports *[akhbār]* and enshrined in the Sunna.[487] Let us first consider some examples from the Qur'ān [and other Scriptures]:

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

So woe to those who pray,	*fa-wailun li'l-muṣallīn:*
but are heedless of their prayers,	*alladhīna hum 'an ṣalāti-him sāhūn:*
and to those who make a show,	*alladhīna hum yurā'ūna*
yet withhold the smallest charity.	*wa yamna'ūna 'l-mā'ūn.*
(107:4,5)	

He has said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

They utter with their mouths	*yaqūlūna bi-afwāhi-him*
what is not in their hearts	*mā laisa fī qulūbi-him:*
Allāh is best aware of what they hide.	*wa 'llāhu a'lamu bi-mā yaktumūn.*
(3:167)	

He has said (Exalted is He):

The hypocrites seek	*inna 'l-munāfiqīna*
to beguile Allāh	*yukhādi'ūna 'llāha*
but it is He who beguiles them.	*wa Huwa khādi'u-hum:*
When they stand up	*wa idhā qāmū ila 'ṣ-*
to perform the prayer,	*ṣalāti qāmū*
they perform it languidly	*kusālā yurā'ūna 'n-*
and to impress people, and	*nāsa*
they are mindful of Allāh but little.	*wa lā yadhkurūna 'llāha illā qalīlā.*
[They are] swaying	*mudhabdhabīna*
between this [and that],	*baina dhālik*
belonging neither	*lā ilā hā'ulā'i*

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[487] The Sunna is the customary practice established by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). The term *sunna* (of which *sunan* is the plural form) may be applied to a particular practice recommended by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as well as to his exemplary conduct in general. Although there are no capital letters in the Arabic script, it is convenient to mark the distinction, in transliteration, between the specific *sunna/sunan* and the general Sunna.

> of Allāh. They will multiply it and purify it, until they finally bring it to wherever Allāh (Exalted is He) wishes it to be delivered, in all of His Dominion *[Sulṭān]*. Allāh will thereupon convey to them, by way of inspiration: "You are custodians of My servant's work, while I am Ever-Watchful *[Raqīb]* over what is in his soul *[nafs]*. This servant of Mine has not devoted his work sincerely to Me, so register him in the Deepest Pit *[Sijjīn]*."[492]
>
> They will also rise aloft with the work of another servant from among His servants. They will diminish it and belittle it, until they finally bring it to wherever Allāh (Exalted is He) wishes it to be delivered, in all of His Dominion *[Sulṭān]*. Allāh will thereupon convey to them, by way of inspiration: "You are custodians of My servant's work, while I am Ever-Watchful *[Raqīb]* over what is in his soul *[nafs]*. This servant of Mine has devoted his work sincerely to Me *[akhlaṣa lī ʿamala-hu]*, so register him in the Highest Heaven *[ʿIlliyyīn]*."[493]

As reported on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) will judge between His creatures, while the members of every religious community *[umma]* fall on their knees. The first to be summoned will be a man who compiled a copy of the Qur'ān, a man who was slain while fighting for Allāh's cause *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*, and a man who possessed considerable wealth.
>
> To the expert on the Qur'ān *[qāri']*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will then say: "To what extent did you put what you learned into practice?" The man will reply: "I used to act upon it through the watches of the night, and at all times during the day." But Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) will say: "You have told a lie!" The angels will also say: "You have told a lie! What you wanted, in fact, was to have people call you 'Qur'ān-expert So-and-so,' and you did indeed acquire that title."
>
> The owner of wealth will be asked: "What did you do, to make good use of all that I made available to you?" The man will reply: "I was the source of compassion, and I applied it to charitable purposes." But Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) will say: "You have told a lie!" The angels will also say: "You have told a lie! What you wanted, in fact, was to have people call you 'Generous Mister So-and-so,' and that was indeed how you came to be called."
>
> The man who was slain while fighting for the cause of Allāh (Exalted is He) will also be brought forward. To him Allāh (Exalted is He) will say: "For what did you do battle?" The man will reply: "I fought for Your cause, until I was slain in Your cause." But Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) will say: "You have told a lie!" The angels will also say: "You have told a lie! What you wanted, in fact, was to have people call you 'Brave Hero So-and-so,' and that was indeed how you came to be called."

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[492] As we are told in the Qur'ān:

No, the record of the dissolute is in Sijjīn.	*kallā inna kitāba 'l-fujjāri la-fī Sijjīn:*
How are you to know what Sijjīn is?	*wa mā adrāka mā Sijjīn:*
A written record. (83:7–9)	*kitābun marqūm.*

[493] An allusion to Q. 83:18–21.

> Allāh (Exalted is He) will then say: "That is how I saw fit to treat you. When you were in private situations, you would brazenly affront Me with heinous sins *['azā'im]*, but when you met with other people, you would approach them modestly and humbly. By making a show of your deeds, you would give people an impression contrary to what was hidden away in your hearts. You were in awe of other people, but you did not regard Me with awe. You honored other people, but you did not honor Me. You abstained, to please other people, from things you did not abandon for My sake. Today, therefore, I am giving you a taste of My painful chastisement, combined with a glimpse of My abundant reward, of which you have been deprived."

As reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When Allāh (Exalted is He) created the Garden of Eden *[Jannat 'Adn]*, He created within it that which no eye has ever seen, of which no ear has ever heard, and the very notion of which has never occurred to the human heart. Then He said to it: "Speak to Me," and it responded by saying three times:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Successful indeed | *qad aflaha 'l-* |
> | are the true believers. (23:1) | *mu'minūn.* |
>
> Then the Garden went on to say: "I am forbidden *[harām]* to every miser *[bakhīl]* and ostentatious hypocrite *[murā'ī]*."

A man once asked Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "In what does salvation reside, tomorrow [at the Resurrection]?" He replied:

> You must not try to deceive Allāh (Exalted is He).

The man then asked: "How could I be guilty of trying to deceive Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)?" The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) explained:

> By doing what He has commanded you to do, but doing it for some purpose other than to obtain the gracious favor of Allāh (Exalted is He).

All of you must therefore beware of hypocritical display *[riyā']*, for it is tantamount to associating partners *[shirk]* with Allāh (Exalted is He). Indeed, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, the ostentatious hypocrite *[murā'ī]* will be summoned by four names, over the heads of all the assembled creatures: "O unbeliever *[yā kāfir]*! O shameless liar *[yā fājir]*! O traitor *[yā ghādir]*! O loser *[yā khāsir]*! Your work has gone astray, and your recompense has been canceled, so there is no share for you here today. Apply for your wages to those for whom you used to work, O deceiver!" Let us therefore take refuge with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) from hypocritical display *[riyā']*, from promoting an undeserved reputation *[sum'a]*, and from hypocrisy itself *[nifāq]*, for that is the work of those who are doomed to the Fire of Hell.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

Surely the hypocrites	*inna 'l-munāfiqīna*
will be in the lowest	*fi 'd-darki 'l-asfali*
depth of the Fire [of Hell]. (4:145)	*mina 'n-nār.*

In other words, they will be in the Pit *[al-Hāwiya]*,[494] in the company of Pharaoh *[Fir'aun]* and Hāmān and their people.

As someone might well see fit to interject at this point, it seems be suggested, in at least one of the traditional reports *[akhbār]*, that there is actually no harm in having our religious practice noticed by our fellow creatures. According to the report in question,[495] it was Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

"A man came to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, I perform my religious practice, intending to keep it private, but I find that people are watching, and that pleases me. If such be the case, am I entitled to any reward?' To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'You are entitled to two rewards: the reward for the secrecy, and the reward for the publicity.'"

To resolve what may appear to be a contradiction, this should be construed as follows: What made that man feel pleased, was the fact that people followed the example he was setting, in the performance of his religious practice. Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was aware of this, so he told the man, in effect: "You are entitled to two rewards: one reward for your righteous work, and one reward for having people follow your good example." As he once said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If someone establishes a good custom *[sanna sunnatan ḥasana]*, he is entitled to the reward for it, and also to the reward of all those who practice it, until the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*....[496]

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[494] This is an allusion to Q. 101:6–11.

[495] **Author's note.** For this traditional report, the chain of transmission goes back through the following links: **Wakī'—Sufyān—Ḥabīb—Abū Ṣāliḥ—Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[496] **Author's note:** This is a partial quotation of the saying *[ḥadīth]*, which continues in the same vein.

On the other hand, if someone enjoys the pleasing sensation in and of itself, and not on account of the good example he is setting for others, he is not entitled to any reward, because vain conceit *[ʿujb]* can only cause the servant to fall from grace in the sight of Allāh.

It was al-Ḥasan al-Basrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "If you wish, you may choose a companion with a fair complexion, but with crude manners, one who has a smooth tongue and a sharp eye, but who is dead at heart. You see physical bodies, not hearts. You listen to the sound of music, but not to a close friend. Tongues have grown fertile, while hearts have turned barren.

"As a matter of fact, several Companions *[Ashāb]* of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) have told me that this Community *[Umma]* will remain beneath the hand of Allāh, in His protective custody, but only as long as its Qur'ān-reciters *[qurrā']* and its commanders *[umarā']* do not lose interest in their work, as long as its honest members *[ṣulaḥā']* do not join the ranks of the lying scoundrels *[fujjār]*, and as long as its best representatives keep the worst at bay. As soon as they reverse their positions, Allāh (Exalted is He) will remove His protecting hand from them. He will smite them with poverty and want. He will fill their hearts with terror, and He will subject them to the rule of tyrants *[jabābira]*, who will make them suffer dreadful torment."

He [al-Ḥasan al-Basrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him)] also said: "What a bad servant [of the Lord] is he! I am speaking of a servant who fits the following description:

- He asks for forgiveness *[maghfira]*, while he is actively engaged in sinful disobedience *[maʿṣiya]*.
- He behaves in a humbly submissive manner, so that he may be credited with loyalty *[amāna]*, but he is only pretending, to hide his disloyalty *[khiyāna]*.
- He forbids what is wrong, but does not refrain from it himself *[yanhā wa lā yantahī]*.
- He enjoins what is right, but does not act upon his own instructions.
- If he gives, he does so very stingily, and if he withholds, he offers no apology.
- If he is in the best of health, he feels secure, but if he falls sick, he becomes remorseful.

- If he is impoverished, he feels sad, and if he gets rich, he is subject to temptation.
- He hopes for salvation, but does not act accordingly.
- He is afraid of punishment, but takes no precautions against it.
- He wishes to receive more benefit, but he does not give thanks [for what he has received].
- He likes the idea of spiritual reward, but he does not practice patience.
- He expedites sleep *[nawm]*, and postpones fasting *[sawm]*."

He [al-Ḥasan al-Basrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him)] spoke one day to Farqad as-Sabakhī, who was sitting in attendance at his meeting *[majlis]*. In sharp contrast to al-Ḥasan, who was dressed in very smart attire, Farqad was wearing a *jubba* made of wool *[ṣūf]*.[497] "My clothing," said al-Ḥasan, "is the clothing of the people of the Garden of Paradise, while your clothing is the clothing of the people of the Fire of Hell. They lodge their pious abstinence *[zuhd]* in their clothing, and their arrogant pride in their breasts. By Allāh, any one of them is far more conceited about his wool *[ṣūf]* than a fashionable shawl-designer is about his fancy shawl. What is wrong with competing together in excellence? Why not dress outwardly in the style of kings, and kill your hearts with fear [of displeasing the Lord]!"

'Umar [ibn al-Khattāb] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "You should dress in a style that will neither cause the Qur'ān-reciters *[qurrā']* to treat you as a laughingstock, nor make silly idiots deride you."

As they used to say: "Be woollen *[ṣūfī]* at heart, and cotton-made *[quṭnī]* in clothing."

To put the subject in a nutshell, the people [who matter to us] fall into three categories, where clothing is concerned: (1) the devout *[atqiyā']*, (2) the saints *[awliyā']*, and (3) the spiritual deputies *[abdāl]*.

- The clothing of the devout *[atqiyā']* is that which is lawful *[ḥalāl]*, in the sense that none of the wearer's fellow creatures have any claim on it, and that it does not violate the sacred law *[shar']* in any respect. As for whether their clothes are of cotton *[quṭn]* or wool *[ṣūf]*, and whether they are white or blue, that is neither here not there.
- The clothing of the saints *[awliyā']* is determined by the [divine]

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[497] The *jubba* is a long outer garment, open in front, with wide sleeves.

commandment. At the very least, it must be sufficient to cover the genital area *['aura]*, and any other part of the body for which it is essential. Some form of clothing is called for, of necessity, to ensure the discouragement of their passionate desires, so that they may attain to the degree of the spiritual deputies *[abdāl]*.

- The clothing of the spiritual deputies *[budalā']*[498] is whatever destiny *[qadar]* brings to the individual concerned, always with due respect to the limits set by the sacred law *[hudūd]*. It may be a plain shirt worth a mere *qīrāt* [one twentieth of a dīnār], or a fine suit worth a hundred dīnārs [gold coins], for there is no self-will involved. They have ascended to the highest height, and there is no passionate desire to be discouraged at the lowest level. For them, it is simply a matter of accepting whatever the Master *[Maulā]* graciously confers, whatever He allows and bestows, without trouble or concern, and without respect for the lower self *[nafs]* and personal preferences.

Aside from these perspectives, any other approach to the subject can be traced to the ancient Time of Ignorance *[Jāhiliyya]*, to the frivolous inclination of the lower self *[nafs]*, and to the influence of passionate desire *[hawā]*.

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[498] See Vol. 2, note 254, p. 175.

CHAPTER SIX

Concerning the special qualities of (1) the days of the week *[ayyām al-usbūʿ]* and (2) the "white days" *[al-ayyām al-bīḍ]*.[499]

Traditional reports concerning the encouragement of fasting on certain days, and referring to the litanies *[awrād]*[500] to be performed therein, at night and in the daytime.

1.

Concerning the special qualities of the days of the week *[ayyām al-usbūʿ]*.

Shaikh Abū Nasr [Muhammad ibn al-Bannāʾ] has informed us, on good traditional authority,[501] that Abū Huraira[502] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) took me by the hand, and told me:

> "'Allāh (Exalted is He) created the dust and soil of the earth *[turba]* on the [first] Saturday *[yawm as-sabt]*. He created the mountains upon it on the [first] Sunday

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[499] According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, *al-ayyām al-bīḍ* [the white days]—like the even shorter expression *al-bīḍ* [the white ones]—is simply an abbreviated way of referring to *ayyām al-layāli 'l-bīḍ* [the days of the white nights], which occur on the thirteenth, the fourteenth, and the fifteenth of the month. They are so called because they are brightly illuminated throughout by the moon, which is then at or near the full. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *B-Y-Ḍ*.)

[500] See Vol. 4, pp. 82–109.

[501] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannāʾ cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father [Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Ahmad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Bannāʾ]—al-Hasan ibn Ahmad ibn ʿAbdu'llāh al-Muqri—al-Husain Ahmad ibn ʿUthmān ibn Yahyā al-Adamī—ʿAbbās ibn Muhammad ibn Hātim ad-Dawrī—Hajjāj ibn Muhammad al-Aʿwar—Ibn Juraij—Ismāʿīl ibn Umayya—Ayyūb ibn Khālid—ʿUbaidu'llāh ibn Rāfiʿ, the client *[mawlā]* of Abū Salama—Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[502] See note 36 on p. 24 above.

> *[yaum al-ahad]*. He created the trees on the [first] Monday *[yaum al-ithnain]*. He created that which is unpleasant on the [first] Tuesday *[yaum ath-thalāthā']*. He created that which is good on the [first] Wednesday *[yaum al-arba'ā']*. He sent the animals forth to roam upon it on the [first] Thursday *[yaum al-khamīs]*. He created Adam (peace be upon him) after the time of the afternoon prayer *['asr]* on the [first] Friday *[yaum al-jum'a]*, and the rest of His creatures He created during one of the hours of Friday, somewhere between the time of the afternoon prayer *['asr]* and the night."[502]

Anas ibn Mālik[503] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asked about the days [of the week]. When he was asked about Saturday *[yaum as-sabt]*, he said:

> "'Saturday is the day of double-dealing *[makr]* and treachery *[khadī'a]*.'

"They said: 'Why is that, O Messenger of Allāh?' and he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'Because it was on a Saturday that the elders of the tribe of Quraish hatched their plot against me, at their meeting in the Council Chamber *[Dār an-Nadwa]*.'[504]

"When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asked about Sunday *[yaum al-ahad]*, he said:

> "'Sunday is the day of planting seeds and cultivating crops.'

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[503] See note 35 on p. 24 above.

[504] The story is told as follows in Ibn Ishāq's Biography of Allāh's Messenger *[Sīrat Rasūli'llāh]*.

When the tribesmen of Quraish saw that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had a party of supporters and companions not of their tribe, and outside their own territory, and that his Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them) had migrated to join them, and had settled in a new home and gained protectors, they feared that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) might join them, since they knew that he had decided to fight them. So they assembled in their council chamber, the house of Qusayy ibn Kilāb, where all their important business was conducted, to consider what they should do in regard to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[Various plans and schemes were proposed and discussed, only to be rejected as impractical or inadequate.] Thereupon Abū Jahl said that he had a plan which had not been suggested hitherto, namely, that each clan should provide a young, powerful, well-born, aristocratic warrior, that each of these should be provided with a sharp sword; then that each of them should strike a blow at him and kill him. Thus they would be relieved of him, and responsibility for his blood would lie upon all the clans. The Banū 'Abd Manāf [the clan to which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) belonged] could not fight them all, and would have to accept the blood-money to which they would all contribute. The senior elder of Quraish exclaimed: "The man is right. In my opinion it is the only thing to do." Having come to a decision, the people dispersed.

Then Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and said: "Do not sleep tonight on the bed on which you usually sleep." [The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) followed this advice, and the assassination plot failed.]

(See: A. Guillaume. *The Life of Muhammad. A translation of Ishāq's Sīrat Rasūl Allāh*. Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press, 1967; pp. 221–3.)

"They said: 'Why is that, O Messenger of Allāh?' and he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'Because it was on a Sunday that this world and its cultivation began.'

"When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asked about Monday [*yaum al-ithnain*], he said:

> "'Monday is the day of traveling and trade.'

"They said: 'Why is that, O Messenger of Allāh?' and he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'Because it was on a Monday that the Prophet Shu'aib[505] (peace be upon him) went traveling and engaged in trade.'

"When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asked about Tuesday [*yaum ath-thalāthā'*], he said:

> "'Tuesday is the day of blood.'

"They said: 'Why is that, O Messenger of Allāh?' and he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'Because it was on a Tuesday that Eve [*Hawwā'*] started menstruating, and it was on a Tuesday that the son of Adam killed his brother.'

"When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asked about Wednesday [*yaum al-arba'ā'*], he said:

> "'Wednesday is the day of catastrophe and disaster.'

"They said: 'Why is that, O Messenger of Allāh?' and he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'Because it was on a Wednesday that Allāh (Exalted is He) caused Pharaoh [*Fir'aun*] and his people to drown, and it was on a Wednesday that He caused 'Ād and Thamūd to perish.'[506]

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[505] The Qur'ānic account of the mission of Shu'aib (peace be upon him) begins with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And to Midian [We sent] their brother, Shu'aib.	*wa ilā Madyana akhā-hum Shu'aibā*
He said: "O my people, worship Allāh!	*qāla yā qaumi 'budu 'llāha*
You have no god other than He.	*mā la-kum min ilāhin ghairuh:*
A clear sign has now come to you	*qad jā'at-kum bayyinatun*
from your Lord…." (7:85)	*min Rabbi-kum….*

The traditional Qur'ānic commentators generally identify Shu'aib as the father-in-law of Moses (peace be upon them both). The story is beautifully related by Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) in the Fourth Discourse of *Jalā' al-Khawāṭir* [*The Removal of Cares*] (pp. 35–36 of the Al-Baz edition).

[506] An allusion to Q. 69:5,6.

"When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asked about Thursday *[yaum al-khamīs]*, he said:

> "'Thursday is the day on which needs are met, and it is the day for entering the presence of worldly rulers *[salāṭīn]*.'

"They said: 'Why is that, O Messenger of Allāh?' and he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'Because it was on a Thursday that Abraham, the Bosom Friend of the All-Merciful *[Ibrāhīm Khalīl ar-Raḥmān]* (peace be upon him) entered the presence of Nimrod *[Namrūd]*, and took Hagar *[Hājar]* away from him.'

"When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asked about Friday, the Day of the Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum‘a]*, he said:

> "'Friday is the day of oration *[khuṭba]*[507] and marriage *[nikāḥ]*.'

"They said: 'Why is that, O Messenger of Allāh?' and he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'Because it was always on a Friday that the Prophets *[Anbiyā']* used to get married.'

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of az-Zuhrī,[508] ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ka‘b heard from his father that his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would never set out on a journey on any day of the week except a Thursday *[yaum al-khamīs]*."

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Mu‘āwiya ibn Qurra, Anas [ibn Mālik] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) attributed the following saying to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

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[507] Since the Arabic text is unvowelled, the reading *khiṭba* [betrothal, proposal of marriage] is also possible. An oration or sermon *[khuṭba]* is delivered immediately before the congregational prayer *[ṣalāt al-jum‘a]* on Friday, the Day of the Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum‘a]*, by the Imām of the congregational mosque *[jāmi‘]*. An oration called *khuṭbat an-nikāḥ* [the wedding sermon] is delivered during a marriage ceremony. (For more on the proposal of marriage *[khiṭba]*, and for the words of a wedding sermon *[khuṭbat an-nikāḥ]*, see Vol. 1, pp. 126–31.)

[508] Abū Zur‘a Muṣ‘ab ibn Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ az-Zuhrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a *Tābi‘ī* [Successor, i.e., member of the generation following that of the Companions]. He died in A.H. 102 or 103. His father, Abū Muṣ‘ab Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ (may Allāh be well pleased with him), was a famous Arab general, and one of the earliest Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He was one of the six members of the consultative council *[shūrā]* appointed by ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) to choose the Caliph who would succeed him as Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Mu'minīn]*. He died in A.H. 50 or 55.

> If someone undergoes a blood-cupping operation *[iḥtajama]*[509] on a Tuesday *[yaum ath-thalāthā']*, when that day coincides with the seventeenth of the month, Allāh (Exalted is He) will draw from him enough blood [to keep him healthy] for a whole year.

According to one traditional account:

"Allāh (Exalted is He) granted Saturday *[yaum as-sabt]* to Moses *[Mūsā]* (peace be upon him), and to fifty Prophets sent as Messengers *[Nabī Mursal]*.

"He granted Sunday *[yaum al-aḥad]* to twenty Prophets *[Anbiyā']*, and to Jesus *['Īsā]* (peace be upon him).

"He granted Monday *[yaum al-ithnain]* to Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and to sixty-three Prophets sent as Messengers *[Nabī Mursal]*.

"He granted Tuesday *[yaum ath-thalāthā']*, to Solomon *[Sulaimān]* (peace be upon him), and to fifty Prophets sent as Messengers *[Nabī Mursal]*.

"He granted Wednesday *[yaum al-arba'ā']* to Jacob *[Ya'qūb]* (peace be upon him), and to fifty Prophets sent as Messengers *[Nabī Mursal]*.

"He granted Thursday *[yaum al-khamīs]* to Adam (peace be upon him), and to fifty Prophets sent as Messengers *[Nabī Mursal]*.

"Friday, the Day of the Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, belongs to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious and Sanctified is He)."[510]

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> My God *[Ilāhī]*, what is the share of good fortune *[ḥaẓẓ]* allotted to my Community *[Ummatī]*?

Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) replied:

> O Muhammad, Friday, the Day of the Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]* belongs to Me, and the Garden of Paradise also belongs to Me. So I have granted Friday to your Community, and the Garden of Paradise along with it. And I, as well as the Garden of Paradise, belong to your Community.[511]

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of

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[509] The verb *iḥtajama* [to undergo the operation of blood-cupping] is derived from the same three-consonant root, *ḥ-j-m*, as the noun *ḥijāma* [the operation of cupping, and the art of performing it]. This procedure, widely used in former times as a treatment for a variety of illnesses, consists in the application to the patient's skin of a glass cup or vessel *[miḥjama]* in which a vacuum has been created, in order to draw the blood to the surface. (For more on the subject of blood-cupping, see Vol. 1, pp. 22 and 365.)

[510] For a lengthy discussion of the special merits of Friday, the Day of the Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, see pp. 295–325 above.)

[511] This is a non-Qur'ānic Divine Saying *[Ḥadīth Qudsī]*.

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone fasts on Wednesday *[ṣawm al-arbaʿāʾ]*, Thursday *[al-khamīs]* and Friday *[al-jumʿa]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will have a palatial mansion built for him in the Garden of Paradise, a palace made of pearls and sapphires and emeralds. Allāh (Exalted is He) will also have him recorded as one who enjoys immunity from the Fire of Hell.

In another pronouncement, also transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone fasts during three days in every month, namely, Thursday *[al-khamīs]*, Friday *[al-jumʿa]*, and Saturday *[as-sabt]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will credit him with the worshipful service *[ʿibāda]* of nine hundred years.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Fast on Saturday *[ṣawm as-sabt]* and Sunday *[al-aḥad]*, and observe those days differently from the Jews *[al-Yahūd]* and the Christians *[an-Naṣārā]*!

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The gates of heaven are opened every Monday *[ithnain]* and Thursday *[khamīs]*. Allāh (Exalted is He) grants forgiveness, on each of those days, to every one of His servants who has not associated anything with Allāh (Exalted is He). The only exception is made in the case where bitter animosity *[shaḥnāʾ]* exists between a man and his brother. Allāh (Exalted is He) says: "You must all pay attention to this pair, until they become reconciled with each other."

According to another traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never failed to fast on those two days [Monday and Thursday], regardless of whether he was at home or on a journey. He used to say:

> Monday and Thursday are two days on which the deeds of His servants are presented to Allāh (Exalted is He) for review.

* * *

2.
Traditional reports concerning the special value of fasting during the "white" days *[al-ayyām al-bīḍ]*.[512]

Shaikh Abū Naṣr [Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ] has informed us, on good traditional authority,[513] that the following saying can be traced back to ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

"To fast on the thirteenth day of the month is equivalent in value to fasting for three thousand years.

"To fast on the fourteenth day of the month is equivalent in value to fasting for ten thousand years.

"To fast on the fifteenth day of the month is equivalent in value to fasting for one hundred and thirteen thousand years."

According to a traditional report transmitted by Abū Isḥāq, on the authority of Jarīr (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> To fast on three days out of every month, namely, the thirteenth and the fourteenth and the fifteenth, is equivalent to fasting all year long *[ṣiyām ad-dahr]*.[514]

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of

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[512] See note 499 on p. 351 above.

[513] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father [Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Bannāʾ]—Hilāl ibn Muḥammad—an-Naqqāsh—al-Ḥusain ibn Sufyān—Sulaimān ibn Yazīd, the client [mawlā] of the tribe of Banū Hāshim—ʿAlī ibn Yazīd—ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Hārūn [ibn ʿAntara]—Saʿīd ibn ʿUthmān—ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[514] According to several traditional reports, the actual practice of fasting all year long *[ṣiyām ad-dahr]* was not encouraged by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), "lest a man should come to believe that this kind of fasting has been ordained by Allāh (Exalted is He), or, through physical incapacity, should become insincere, or because, by fasting all the days of the year, he would do so even on the days when fasting is strictly forbidden." (See: E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *ʿ-W-L*.)

The likeness of those who have been	*mathalu 'lladhīna*
loaded with the Torah,	*ḥummilu 't-Taurāta*
but then have not carried it	*thumma lam yaḥmilū-hā*
[into practice], is as the likeness	*ka-mathali 'l-ḥimāri*
of a donkey carrying tomes.	*yaḥmilu asfārā:*
Wretched is the likeness	*bi'sa mathalu 'l-*
of the people who have	*qaumi 'lladhīna*
cried lies to Allāh's signs.	*kadhdhabū bi-āyāti 'llāh:*
And Allāh does not guide	*wa 'llāhu lā yahdi 'l-*
the evildoing folk. (62:5)	*qauma 'ẓ-ẓālimīn:*

In order to refute their statement: "We have a Sabbath *[Sabt]*, while you have no Sabbath of your own," He also sent down (Blessed and Exalted is He):

O you who believe! When the call	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanū*
is proclaimed for the prayer	*idhā nūdiya li'ṣ-ṣalāti*
on the Day of Congregation,	*min yaumi 'l-jumu'ati*
hasten to the remembrance of Allāh	*fa-'s'au ilā dhikri 'llāhi*
and leave buying and selling aside.	*wa dharu 'l-bai':*
That is better for you,	*dhālikum khairun la-kum*
if you did but know. (62:9)	*in kuntum ta'lamūn.*

Then He said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

But when they spy some merchandise	*wa idhā ra'au tijāratan*
or sport, they break away to it	*au lahwani 'nfaḍḍū ilai-hā*
and leave you standing.	*wa tarakū-ka qā'imā:*
Say: "What is with Allāh is better	*qul mā 'inda 'llāhi khairun*
than sport and merchandise."	*mina 'l-lahwi wa mina 't-tijāra:*
And Allāh is the Best of providers.	*wa 'llāhu Khairu 'r-rāziqīn.*
(62:11)	

This revelation came in response to what used to happen when the caravan *['Īr]* approached the city of Medina, and the townsfolk greeted its arrival with the beating of drums and the clapping of hands, so the people would come out of the mosque *[masjid]*. On one particular day, the caravan arrived and the people came out of the mosque, apart from twelve men and one woman. Then a second caravan arrived, and out they came once again, apart from twelve men and one woman. It was then that Dihya ibn Khalīfa al-Kalbī, of the tribe of 'Āmir ibn 'Awf, arrived with merchandise from Syria. (This was before he had accepted Islām.) He used to carry with him all sorts of merchandise, and the people of Medina would greet him with the beating of drums and the clapping of hands. On this occasion, his arrival coincided with Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, when the Prophet (Allāh nighttime prayer called *witr*, before going to sleep, and (3) the forenoon prayer *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*.”[518]

The following traditional report[519] has been transmitted by ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Hārūn ibn ʻAntara, on the authority of his father, Hārūn, who told ʻAbd al-Malik that his grandfather, ʻAntara, had said:

“I once heard ʻAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) say: ‘I came to Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) one day, around the time of noon, while he was indoors in his room. I saluted him with the greeting of peace, and he returned my salutation, then he said: “O ʻAlī, here is Gabriel, offering you the greeting of peace!” So I said: “Peace be unto you, and also unto him, O Messenger of Allāh!” He then said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): “Come over here beside me,” so I moved till I was close beside him, whereupon he said:

“‘“O ʻAlī, Gabriel is talking to you. He is saying: “You must fast during three days out of every month. For the first day, the reward of ten thousand years will be recorded in your favor; for the second day, the reward of thirty thousand years; and for the third day, the reward of three hundred thousand years.”

“‘“O Messenger of Allāh,” said I, “is this reward for me in particular, or is it for all mankind in general?”

“‘“O ʻAlī,” he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): “Allāh will bestow this reward not only upon you, but also upon those who come after you, provided they perform the same good works as you do.”

“‘“O Messenger of Allāh,” said I, “which days of the month are the three concerned?”

In answer to my question, he told me (Allāh bless him and give him peace): “They are the three known as the “white” days *[al-ayyām al-bīḍ]*; that is to say, the the thirteenth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth of the month.”’”’

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[518] The forenoon prayer *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]* is not one of the five obligatory daily prayers. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once described it as “the prayer of those who frequently repent *[ṣalāt al-awwābīn]*.” According to one authority cited by E.W. Lane in his *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. ʼ-W-B, the time for its [optional] performance is “when the young camels feel the heat of the sun from the parched ground.” According to Thomas Patrick Hughes (*Dictionary of Islam*, art. SALAT), the forenoon prayer *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]* consists of eight cycles *[rakaʻāt]*, and the time for its optional performance is around 11 a.m.

[519] See pp. 73–75 above.

ʿAntara then went on to say:

"So I said to ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him): 'Why do you call these days the "white" days?' ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) then told me the following story:

"'When Allāh (Exalted is He) evicted Adam (peace be upon him) from the Garden of Paradise, and sent him down to the earth, he was so scorched by the sun that his body turned as black as pitch. Gabriel (peace be upon him) then came to him and said: 'O Adam, would you like to have your skin turn white?' Adam said yes, he would like that very much, so Gabriel said to him: 'In that case, you must fast on the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth of the month.' Adam (peace be upon him) accepted the challenge, and began by fasting on the first of these days. As soon as he had done so, one third of his body turned white. Then he fasted on the second day, and found that two thirds of his body had now turned white. Then he fasted on the third day, after which the whole of his body had turned white. This explains why they are called the "white" days *[al-ayyām al-bīḍ]*.'"

In his work entitled *Adab al-Kātib* [The Secretary's Manual of Style], al-Qutabī[520] says: "The Arabs call them the "white" days *[al-ayyām al-bīḍ]* because their nights are brightly illuminated by the moon, which is visible [in the clear desert sky] from the beginning to the end of each night."

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-ʿālamīn].

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[520] Also known as Ibn Qutaiba, he was born in A.H. 213 and died ca. A.H. 270. He is one of the lexicologists and grammarians cited by E.W. Lane in his *Arabic-English Lexicon*. According to Sir Hamilton Gibb.

"In a long series of works [Ibn Qutaiba] aimed to furnish the secretaries and the reading public with compendia and extracts from all branches of Arabic learning, but incorporated in them also those elements of the Persian historical and court-literature which could be harmonized with the Arabic and Islamic humanities." (H.A.R. Gibb, *Arabic Literature*. Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 77.)

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He once said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> You must not sit at the feet of a religious scholar [*'ālim*], unless he summons you away from five toward five, namely: (1) away from indulgence [*raghba*], in the direction of abstinence [*zuhd*], (2) away from hypocritical display [*riyā'*], in the direction of sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*], (3) away from arrogant pride [*kibr*], in the direction of modest humility [*tawāḍu'*], (4) away from fawning flattery [*mudāhana*], in the direction of honest advice [*munāṣaḥa*], and (5) away from ignorance [*jahl*], in the direction of knowledge [*'ilm*].

He once said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Allāh (Exalted is He) says:[490] "I am the Best Partner [*Ana Khairu Sharīk*]. If someone associates a partner with Me, in his undertaking, it involves the partner ascribed to Me [*sharīkī*] and has nothing to do with Me. I accept only that which is devoted solely to Me. O Children of Adam, I am the Best Participant [*Ana Khairu Qasīm*], so reconsider that work of yours, which you have performed for someone other than Me, because your wage is incumbent only on the one for whom you did the work."

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> You may congratulate this Community [*Umma*] on their brilliance and high standing in the sphere of religion, and on their empowerment in the countries of the earth, so long as they do not perform the work of the hereafter for the sake of this world. If anyone does the work of the hereafter for the sake of this world, it will not be accepted of him, and in the hereafter he will have no share.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Allāh will surely grant the benefits of this world [for work performed] with the intention of gaining the benefits of the hereafter, but He will not grant the benefits of the hereafter [for work performed] with the intention of gaining the benefits of this world.

As reported on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On the night when I was taken on my Heavenly Journey [*usriya bī*], I passed by a group of people whose lips had been snipped by scissors of fire. "Who are these?" I said to Gabriel (peace be upon him), so he told me: "They are the preachers [*khuṭabā'*] of your Community. They say something, but they do not

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[489] This is an allusion to the Qur'ānic verse [*āya*]:

He knows the treachery of the eyes,	*ya'lamu khā'inata 'l-a'yuni*
and what the breasts conceal. (40:19)	*wa mā tukhfi 'ṣ-ṣudūr.*

[490] This is a non-Qur'ānic Divine Saying [*Ḥadīth Qudsī*].

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Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth

[Al Ghunya li-Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq]

A COMPLETE RESOURCE ON THE INNER AND OUTER ASPECTS OF ISLAM

VOLUME FOUR

SHAIKH ʿABD AL-QĀDIR AL-JĪLĀNĪ
TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC BY MUHTAR HOLLAND

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Concerning the practice of fasting all year long *[ṣiyām ad-dahr]*, and the spiritual reward and recompense due to someone who observes it.

Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' has informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,[1] that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The most meritorious form of fasting *[ṣiyām]* is the fasting of David *[Dāwūd]*,[2] and if someone fasts throughout the entire year *[ṣāma 'd-dahr kulla-hu]*, he has already given himself to Allāh (Exalted is He).

According to Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a person fasts all year long *[ṣāma 'd-dahr]*, Hell will become too narrow for him, [as it keeps shrinking] like this...

—and he clenched his fists repeatedly, as if making a finger-count up to ninety *['aqada tis'īn]*.

According to a report from Shu'aib, it was Sa'd ibn Ibrāhīm who said: "'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) used to fast all year long *[kānat taṣūmu 'd-dahr]*."

Ya'qūb is reported as having said: "My father once told us that Sa'd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) made a constant practice of fasting throughout the last forty years of his life."

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[1] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Abu'l-Hasan 'Alī ibn Ahmad al-Muqri—Ibrāhīm ibn Ahmad al-Qarmainī—al-Ḥasan ibn Suhail—Yahyā—Ibrāhīm ibn Abī Najā—Ṣafwān ibn Salīm—'Alqama ibn Abī 'Alqama—'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[2] As reported on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The best kind of fasting *[ṣiyām]* is the fasting of David *[Dāwūd]* (peace be upon him), for he made it his practice to fast on alternate days throughout the entire year *[nuṣf ad-dahr]*.

Abū Idrīs ʿĀʾidhu'llāh is reported as having said: "Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) kept fasting until he become as slim as a toothpick, so I said to him: 'O Abū Mūsā, how about giving your poor self a break?' But he replied: 'Give it a break? What I want is to see it overtaking all the lean horses in the race!'"

Abū Isḥāq ibn Ibrāhīm is reported as having said: "ʿAmmār, the Christian monk *[rāhib]*, once told me about a remarkable dream-experience of his, which he described in these words: 'I saw [the holy spiritual being called] Sakīna aṭ-Ṭafāriyya in my dream. She was present with us at the religious gathering *[majlis]* convened by ʿĪsā ibn Zādhān at al-Abla, having come down from al-Basra for the specific purpose of paying him a visit. So I said to her: "O Sakīna, what has ʿĪsā done [to deserve your attention]?" She laughed, then she replied: "He has donned the raiment of splendid beauty *[bahāʾ]*!" The servants circled around him with pitchers [of water for his ablution], then he put on his clothes, and someone was heard to exclaim: "O reader of Scripture *[yā qāriʾ]*, you must recite an incantation *[ruqya]*, for—by my life—your fasting has left you utterly emaciated!" ʿĪsā had fasted indeed, to the point where his body was bent in a stoop, and he had lost his voice.'"

Anas [ibn Mālik] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "Abū Ṭalḥa (may Allāh be well pleased with him) did no fasting at all, during the lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), on account of [his constant involvement in] military campaigns *[ghazw]*. But after Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had died, I never once saw him break his daily fast, except on the Day of Breaking Fast *[Yaum al-Fiṭr]* [at the end of the month of Ramaḍān], and on the Day of Sacrifice *[Yaum an-Naḥr]* [at the end of the Pilgrimage]."

As we learn from a traditional report, it was Abū Bakr ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām who said: "Someone told me that, on a summer's day, he had seen Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) pouring water over his head, on account of the extreme intensity of the heat and thirst, even though he was fasting at the time."

ʿAlī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported[3] as having said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him

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[3] **Author's note:** The chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report goes back to: Sufyān [ath-Thawrī]—Abū Isḥāq—al-Ḥārith—ʿAlī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

Chieftain of the Days *[Sayyid al-Ayyām]*,[447] and the dearest of them all to Allāh (Exalted is He). It is the day on which Adam (peace be upon him) was created, on which he was lodged in the Garden of Paradise, and on which he was expelled therefrom. It is also the day on which the Final Hour *[as-Sā'a]* will occur. There is not one earthly creature that does not make sounds of alarm, as it waits to see what will happen on Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*, apart from 'the two heavyweights *[ath-thaqalain]*' [human beings and the jinn].'

"I then returned home, where I met up with 'Abdu'llāh ibn Salām (may Allāh be well pleased with him), so I told him my story. I had just begun to relate my conversation with Ka'b, when 'Abdu'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him) remarked: 'Ka'b did not tell the truth. It is just as Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said, and it is also in the Torah *[Taurāh]*.' 'Well,' said I, 'he did come back [and admit that he had been wrong].'

"'Abdu'llāh ibn Salām (may Allāh be well pleased with him) then told me: 'I happen to know that very hour,' so I asked: 'Which hour is it, exactly?' When he replied: 'The last hour of daytime on the Day of Congregation *[Yaum al-Jum'a]*,' I said: 'How can that be? I distinctly heard the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say: 'If any true believer *[mu'min]* performs a ritual prayer *[yuṣallī]*...,' and that [last hour of daytime] is not a time of ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.' He countered my objection by saying: 'Surely you must have heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> If someone waits expectantly for [the proper time to perform] an obligatory ritual prayer *[ṣalāt farḍ]*, he is actually in a state of prayer *[fī ṣalāt]*.

"'Yes, of course,' said I. 'Well then,' said he, 'that is how it is [in the case of the special hour].'"

In one version *[lafẓ]* of this report, transmitted on the authority of Muhammad ibn Sīrīn, the wording attributed to Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is as follows: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> On Friday, the Day of Congregation *[al-Jum'a]*, there is an hour so special that, if any believing servant *['abd mu'min]* connects with it, and asks Allāh (Exalted is He) for something good, at that particular time, He is sure to grant him his request.

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[447] See n. 431 on p. 300 above.

Concerning the merit of fasting *[ṣiyām]* in general.

On this subject, as we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr,[a] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone devotes a single day to fasting, for the purpose of gaining the countenance of Allāh (Exalted is He), Allāh will keep him at a distance from Hell—at the distance covered by a raven *[ghurāb]* that takes flight when it is merely a chick, and then stays airborne till it dies of old age.

It is said that the raven *[ghurāb]* has a normal lifespan of fifty years!

According to a report from Abu'd-Dardā' (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> If someone devotes a single day to fasting, for the sake of Allāh's cause *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*, Allāh will install a trench *[khandaq]* between him and the Fire of Hell, and the width thereof will be as great as the distance between the heaven and the earth.

According to a another traditional report, this one from Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone devotes a single day to fasting, for the sake of Allāh's cause *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*, Allāh will reward him for it by keeping his face at a distance from the Fire of Hell, for seventy autumn seasons.

'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: "I once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> "'Whenever a servant [of the Lord] embarks upon the morning in a state of fasting, the gates of heaven are opened up for him, the members of his body glorify the Lord, and the inhabitants of the heaven of this lower world *[ahl samā' ad-dunyā]* seek forgiveness on his behalf, until the world disappears behind the veil [of night]. If that servant also performs one or two cycles of ritual prayer

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[a] **Author's note**. Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **'Amr ibn Rabī'a—Salām ibn Qais** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

> *[ṣallā rak'a aw rak'atain]*, as a voluntary act of devotion *[taṭawwu'an]*, the heaven will radiate a light for his benefit, and his wives among the lovely-eyed brides of Paradise *[al-ḥūr al-'īn]*[9] will say: "O Allāh, fetch him here to us, for we are eagerly yearning to set our eyes upon him!" If he also declares the Uniqueness of Allāh *[hallala]*,[10] or proclaims His Glory *[sabbaḥa]*,[11] his utterances will be received by seventy thousand angels, who will go on recording them until the world disappears behind the veil [of night].'"

As reported by Abū Ṣāliḥ, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Every good deed performed by the human being *[ibn Ādam]* is [known to be counted] as from ten good deeds to a hundred good deeds, or up to seven hundred good deeds, with the exception of fasting *[ṣawm]*, for Allāh (Exalted is He) has said in one of His Books: "Fasting is Mine, and I determine its reward."[12] As for the odor of the mouth of someone who is fasting, it is more fragrant to Allāh than the scent of musk.

'Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "I once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> Though a person is prevented, by keeping the fast, from taking the food and drink for which he has an appetite, Allāh will feed him from the fruits of the Garden of Paradise, and He will quench his thirst from the pure drink thereof.

According to a report from Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> For all those people who perform good work, there is a particular gate, among the gateways of the Garden of Paradise, through which they will be invited to enter, as a reward for that good work. As for the people who practice fasting, there is a special gate through which they will be invited to enter, and it is called *ar-Rayyān* ["plump and juicy"].

[9] The 'houries' *[ḥūr* or *ḥawrā']* of Paradise are mentioned in several verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān. Literally, according to the Arabic lexicographers, the term means 'women whose eyes are characterized by intense whiteness of the part that is white, and intense blackness of the part that is black,' or, more poetically, 'women with eyes resembling those of the gazelle.' (See E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ḥ–W–R*.)

[10] The Arabic verb *hallala*, of which *tahlīl* is the corresponding verbal noun, means "to declare the Uniqueness of Allāh, by saying: 'There is no god but Allāh *[lā ilāha illa'llāh]*.'"

[11] The Arabic verb *sabbaḥa*, of which *tasbīḥ* is the corresponding verbal noun, means "to proclaim the Glory of Allāh, by saying: 'Glory be to Allāh *[subḥāna 'llāh]*.'"

[12] Variants of this Divine Saying *[Ḥadīth Qudsī]* have been recorded by several of the most highly respected traditional authorities. For a scholarly study of six of these variants (none of them quite identical with either of those quoted in the above subsection), see: William A. Graham, *Divine Word and Prophetic Word in Early Islam*. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1977, pp. 180–190.

When Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) heard this, he said: "O Messenger of Allāh, will some folk be invited to enter through all of these gates?" "Yes," replied the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), "and I do hope that you will be one of them, O Abū Bakr!" He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Everything has its own gate or doorway, and the doorway to worshipful service *['ibāda]* is fasting.

According to a another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> You must be sure to practice fasting, for your hearts will be then be purified.

As reported on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Fasting is one half of patience *[aṣ-ṣaumu niṣfu 's-ṣabr]*. Everything has to pay some form of alms-due *[zakāt]*, and the alms-due of the physical body is fasting.

As reported on the authority of Abū Awfā (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The sleep of one who fasts is an act of worshipful service *['ibāda]*, his silence is a glorification of the Lord *[tasbīḥ]*,[15] and his good work is sure to be accepted.

According to a another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> A table made of gold will be spread, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, before those who now observe the practice of fasting. It will be laden with fish, so they will eat thereof, while the rest of the people look on.

This next report has come to us from Aḥmad ibn Abi'l-Ḥawārī, who said that he heard it from Abū Sulaimān, when the latter told him: "Abū 'Alī al-Asamm ['the Deaf'] has brought me the finest traditional saying *[ḥadīth]* I ever heard in this world. This is how it goes:

"A table will be laid before those who now practice fasting, and they will eat from it while the rest of the people are being subjected to the Reckoning. 'O Lord,' the latter will say, 'how is it that we are being called to account, while those folk are busy eating?' So He will explain: 'For such a long time, they would be engaged in fasting, while you would be breaking fast, and they would be keeping night vigil, while you would be sleeping.'"

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[15] See note 11 on p. 9 above.

As reported by Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When they emerge from their graves [at the Resurrection], the fragrant aroma of musk will issue from the mouths of those who now practice fasting. A table will be brought to them from the Garden of Paradise, and from it they will eat, while sitting in the shade of the Heavenly Throne *['Arsh]*

It was Sufyān ibn 'Uyaina who said: "According to my information, someone who keeps the fast will not be called to account [at the Resurrection] for what he takes when he breaks his fast."

As reported by Abū Ṣāliḥ, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) says: "Fasting is Mine, and I determine its reward. He abstains from his carnal appetite, his food, and his drink for My sake. Fasting is a protective shield *[junna]*." For someone who keeps the fast, there are two delights in store: one delight at the moment of breaking his fast, and one delight at the moment of meeting his Lord. As for the odor of the mouth of someone who is fasting, it is more fragrant to Allāh than the scent of musk.

According to a another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Fasting is a protective shield *[junna]*, by means of which the servant [of the Lord] is shielded from the Fire of Hell.

According to Sa'īd ibn Jubair, who heard the report from Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said:

"I feel no keen sense of regret over anything belonging to this world, which I shall have to leave behind me, apart from fasting in the midday heat *[hājira]* and walking to the ritual prayer *[salāt]*."

As reported by Mujāhid, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a man were to fast voluntarily *[tatawwu'an]*, for the sake of Allāh, even if he were to be given enough gold to fill the earth, he would not have received his reward in full, this side of the final Reckoning.

Traditional reports concerning the recitation of various litanies *[awrād]* during the observance of night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]*, which is a practice to be encouraged.

As for the recitation of nighttime litanies *[awrād al-lail]*, and the incentive to keep vigil *[qiyām]*, there are many traditional reports in favor of the practice. Some of these reports, the authenticity of which is unanimously accepted, are recorded in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ*'s,[14] while some are mentioned in other books [of tradition]. Let us therefore quote a number of examples from these sources:

As reported on the authority of Shafīq, it was 'Abdu'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "A certain man was mentioned in the presence of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), to whom someone said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, so-and-so spent the whole night asleep, right through to the break of day. He never got up to perform any [voluntary] ritual prayers.' On hearing this, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) exclaimed:

> 'The devil *[shaiṭān]* must have pissed in that man's ear!'"

According to one traditional report *[khabar]* [the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said]:

> While a man is sleeping, the devil *[shaiṭān]* ties knots on his head, three knots in all. If the sleeper sits up and remembers Allāh (Exalted is He), one knot will be undone. If he performs the minor ritual ablution *[wuḍū']*, a second knot will be untied, and if he performs two cycles of ritual prayer *[ṣallā rak'atain]*, all the knots will be loosened. In that case, when morning comes, he will be fresh and in a cheerful mood; otherwise, however, the morning will find him sluggish and bad-tempered.

According to another traditional report *[khabar]* [the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said]:

> The devil *[shaiṭān]* has a kind of snuff *[sa'ūṭ]*, a kind of syrup *[la'ūq]* and a kind of powder *[dharūr]*. When he gets the servant [of the Lord] to take this snuff,

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[14] These are the two most famous collections of Prophetic traditions, separately entitled *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. (The term *ṣaḥīḥ* means "correct, authentic.")

> the man becomes badly behaved. When he administers the syrup, the man acquires a sharp and evil tongue. Then, when he applies the powder, the man sleeps right through the night till the break of day.

It is customary[15] to prolong the upright posture *[tūl al-qiyām]* in the course of the [voluntary] nighttime ritual prayer *[salāt al-lail]*, which is performed in two sets of two cycles *[mathnā mathnā]*. (In the [voluntary] daytime ritual prayer *[salāt an-nahār]*, on the other hand, it is customary to emphasize the frequency of bowing *[rukū']* and prostration *[sujūd]*.) Nevertheless, if the worshipper wishes to perform it as a four-cycle prayer, with one concluding salutation *[taslīma]*, it is permissible for him to do so.

In the case of the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the nighttime ritual prayer *[salāt al-lail]* was [more than] a supererogatory devotion *[nāfila]*; it was also an obligatory duty *[farīda]*, an act of drawing near [to Allāh] *[qurba]*, and a charismatic event *[karāma]*. In the case of his Community *[Umma]*, it is a complement and supplement to the obligatory observances *[farā'id]*.

As reported on the authority of Sālim, it was Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said:

"Whenever a man experienced an unusual dream, during the lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), he would be sure to recount it to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). I dearly wished that I might also experience such a dream, so that I could then recount it to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). At the time I am recalling, during the lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), when I was quite a young fellow and still a bachelor, I would often sleep in the mosque *[masjid]*. It was there that I eventually saw a vision in my sleep: It seemed as if two angels had seized me and carried me toward the Fire of Hell, which appeared to be sunk in a hole, like the hole of a well. It also appeared to have two horns, like the horns [or posts] of a well. I noticed the presence of people I knew, so I set about saying: 'I take refuge with Allāh from the Fire of Hell. I take refuge with Allāh from the Fire of Hell.' At this point, another angel approached us and said: 'It will come as no surprise to me, if you really do end up here!'"

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[15] By "customary" we mean following the exemplary custom [*sunna* in Arabic] of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) went on to say: "I recounted this experience to [my sister] Ḥafsa, and Ḥafsa (may Allāh be well pleased with her) recounted it in turn to [her husband] the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and give him peace). When he had heard the story, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: 'Yes, the man is the servant of Allāh. If only he would perform the ritual prayer *[yuṣallī]* during part of the night!'"

Sālim concluded this report with the observation: "From that moment on, Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) spent very little of the night asleep."

As reported on the authority of Abū Salama, it was 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Amr al-'Āṣ (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to me:

> "'You must not be like so-and-so, who used to stay awake at night *[kāna yaqūmu 'l-lail]*, but neglected to observe the practice of night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]*.'"

According to one traditional report,[16] al-Ḥusain ibn 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was told by his father, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once paid a nighttime visit to him and his [wife, the Prophet's] daughter, Fāṭima (may Allāh be well pleased with her and with her husband), only to find them both sound asleep.

[The report continues in 'Alī's own words (may Allāh be well pleased with him)]: "He said: 'Are you not performing your prayers?' So I replied: 'O Messenger of Allāh, our souls are surely in the hand of Allāh (Exalted is He), so if He wishes to arouse us, He will surely arouse us!'" Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) moved away, when I said that to him, and he did not offer any direct response, but I could hear him slapping his thigh, as he recited (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

But man is more than anything	*wa kāna 'l-insānu*
prone to disputation. (18:54)'"	*akthara shai'in jadalā*

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[16] **Author's note**: For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: Abū Ṣāliḥ—Ibn Shihāb—'Alī ibn al-Ḥusain—his father, al-Ḥusain ibn 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—his father, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' has informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,[17] that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Two cycles of ritual prayer *[rak'atān]*, performed in the middle of the night, are better than this world and all that it contains. But for the hardship it would have caused my Community *[Ummatī]*, I would have made their performance compulsory for them.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr,[18] Abū Muslim once asked Abū Dharr (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "Which nighttime prayer *[salāt al-lail]* is the most meritorious?" Abū Dharr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) responded by saying: "I once asked Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) that very same question, and he told me:

> "'[The most meritorious is the prayer in] the middle of the night *[jawf al-lail]*—(or he may have said: 'the halfway point of the night *[nisf al-lail]*')—though few indeed are they who perform it.'"

According to certain traditional reports *[akhbār]*, the Prophet David *[Dāwūd an-Nabī]* (peace be upon him) once asked a similar question of his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), for he said: "My God *[Ilāhī]*, I dearly wish to offer You my worshipful service, so which time is most appropriate?" Allāh (Exalted is He) thereupon conveyed to him *[awhā ilai-hi]* by way of inspiration: "O David, do not keep vigil in either the first part of the night or the last part thereof, because if someone keeps vigil in the first part, he will sleep through the last part, and if someone keeps vigil in the last part, he will not keep vigil in the first part. You should rather keep vigil in the middle of the night, for then you will be alone with Me, and I will be Alone with you. You should also offer up your needs to Me [at that time of night]."

As reported on the authority of Yahyā ibn al-Mukhtār, it was al-Ḥasan [al-Basrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "The servant [of the Lord] can perform no deed that is more soothing to the eye, or lighter on the back, or more cheering to the spirit, than vigil kept from the middle of the night to the very end—unless it be the spending of wealth on a worthy cause."

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[17] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Sufyān ath-Thawrī—Abu'z-Zubair—Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)**—the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[18] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **Abu'l-'Āliya—Abū Muslim—Abū Dharr** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)**—the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Abu'd-Dardā' (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to say: "O you people, for you I am a faithful counsellor *[nāṣiḥ]*, for you I am a caring sympathizer *[shafīq]*, [so hear me when I say]: 'Perform the ritual prayer in the darkness of the night, in preparation for the lonely desolation of the graves. Keep the fast here in this world, in preparation for the blistering heat of the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum an-Nushūr]*. Be active in charitable giving, for fear of a day of great hardship *[yaum 'asir]*.[19] O you people, for you I am a faithful counsellor *[nāṣiḥ]*, for you I am a caring sympathizer *[shafīq]*!'"

Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' has also informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,[20] that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When a third of the night is still remaining, Allāh (Exalted is He) descends to the lowest heaven *[as-samā' ad-dunyā]*, and He keeps saying, until the dawn breaks: "Is there anyone ready to appeal to Me, so that I may answer his plea? Is there anyone ready to seek My forgiveness, so that I may forgive him? Is there anyone ready to ask Me for sustenance, so that I may sustain him? Is there anyone seeking the removal of harm, so that I may remove it from him?"

Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' has further informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,[21] that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Our Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) descends every night to the lowest heaven *[as-samā' ad-dunyā]*, during the last third of the night, and He says: "Is there anyone seeking forgiveness, so that I may forgive him? Is there anyone offering a supplication, so that I may respond to him? Is there anyone making a petition, so I may grant his petition?"

This is surely enough to explain why they [our righteous predecessors] would always recommend the performance of ritual prayer *[salāt]* during the last part of the night!

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[19] This is an allusion to Q. 74:8–10

[20] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Yahyā ibn Abī Kathīr—Abū Ja'far—Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[21] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Abū Umāma (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "When someone asked Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'Which part of the night is best for the hearing [of supplications]?' he replied:

> "'The middle of the last part of the night, and the ends of the prescribed ritual prayers *[adbār aṣ-ṣalawāt al-maktūba]*.'"

As reported on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The best kind of fasting *[ṣiyām]* is the fasting of David *[Dāwūd]* (peace be upon him), for he made it his practice to fast on alternate days throughout the entire year *[ṣawm ad-dahr]*. The best kind of ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* is likewise the ritual prayer of David *[Dāwūd]* (peace be upon him), for he used to sleep for half of the night, then devote the last part of the night to ritual prayer, until one sixth of the night still remained.

In differently worded version *[lafẓ]* of this report from 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the saying attributed to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) reads as follows:

> The ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* that is dearest to Allāh is the ritual prayer of David *[Dāwūd]* (peace be upon him). He used to sleep for half of the night, then wake up and keep vigil. Then he would sleep in the last part of the night. He would thus keep vigil for the third of the night after its halfway point.

Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "I divide the night into thirds. During one third I sleep, during one third I perform the ritual prayer *[uṣallī]*, and during one third I memorize the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)."

It was Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "The superior merit of the [voluntary] nighttime ritual prayer *[ṣalāt al-lail]*, as opposed to the [voluntary] daytime ritual prayer *[ṣalāt an-nahār]*, is comparable to the superior merit of charitable donation *[ṣadaqa]* made in secret, as opposed to charitable donation made in public."

'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "A single cycle of ritual prayer *[rak'a]*, performed in the nighttime, is better than ten performed in the daytime."

It is reported that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once asked Gabriel *[Jibrīl]* (peace be upon him): "Which part of

—this refers to the following incident: The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once entered the Sacred Mosque *[al-Masjid al-Ḥarām]* by the Gate of Banī Sahm ibn ʿAmr ibn Ḥasīs. The people of Quraish were sitting in the Mosque, so the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) passed straight through, without sitting down, and made his exit by the Gate of aṣ-Ṣafā. They looked at him as he went out, though they had not noticed him when he entered, so they did not recognize him. At the Gate of of aṣ-Ṣafā, he was met by al-ʿĀṣ ibn Wā'il ibn Hishām ibn Sa'īd ibn Sa'd ibn Sahm, who was on his way in as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was coming out.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had recently suffered the loss of his son, ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Muhammad. In those days, when a man died without leaving a son to inherit from him, people would refer to him as "the one cut off *[al-abtar]*." So, when al-ʿĀṣ ibn Wā'il finally joined the people inside, they asked him: "Who was it that you met on your way in?" and he told them: "The one cut off *[al-abtar]*." In the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The one who hates you,	*inna shāni'a-ka*
he is the one cut off. (108:3)	*huwa 'l-abtar.*

—which were thereupon sent down, "the one who hates you *[shāni'a-ka]*" means: "your enemy, and your detester," while "he is the one cut off *[huwa 'l-abtar]*" means: "Cut off from all that is good is al-ʿĀṣ ibn Wā'il. As for you, O Muhammad, you will be remembered in My presence, whenever you remember Me." Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) then exalted his renown *[dhikr]* among the people at large. Allāh (Exalted is He) said to him:

Did We not cause	*a-lam nashraḥ*
your breast to expand for you,	*la-ka ṣadra-k:*
and relieve you of your burden,	*wa waḍa'nā 'an-ka wizra-k:*
that weighed down your back?	*alladhī anqaḍa ẓahra-k:*
Did We not exalt your fame?	*wa rafa'nā la-ka dhikra-k.*
(94:1–4)	

Yes indeed, for he is remembered and mentioned by name (Allāh bless him and give him peace) on every Day of Festival *[ʿĪd]* and Congregation *[Jum'a]*, in the pulpits *[manābir]* and the mosques *[masājid]*, in the call to prayer *[adhān]*, the announcement that prayer is about to begin *[iqāma]*, and the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* itself, and on all important

Concerning the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* performed by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) at certain times during the night.

On the subject of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* performed by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) at certain times during the night, many traditional reports are recorded in the collections that are unanimously accepted as authentic. Let us therefore quote some examples from these reliable sources:

Abū Isḥāq is reported as having said: "I once paid a visit to al-Aswad ibn Yazīd. He was a spiritual brother of mine, and a good friend, so I said to him: 'O Abū 'Amr, tell me what 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) related to you about the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).' In response to my request, he told me that she had said (may Allāh be well pleased with her):

"'"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to sleep during the first part of the night, and devote the latter part of it to keeping vigil. Then, if he needed to attend to his family, he would take care of the need in question. Without touching water, he would then go straight to sleep. As soon as he heard the first call [to prayer], he would jump up *[wathaba]*." ('No, by Allāh, she did not say: "he would stand up *[qāma]*."') "and pour water on himself." ('No again, by Allāh, she did not say: "and perform the major ablution *[ightasala]*." I know what you have in mind!') "If he was not in a state of major ritual impurity *[junub]*, he would perform his minor ablution *[wuḍū']* in preparation for the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. Then he would perform the prayer *[ṣallā]*."'"

As reported on the authority of Kuraib, the freedman *[maulā]* of Ibn 'Abbās: "Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once spent a night in the home of Maimūna, the Mother of the Believers *[Umm al-Muʾminīn]* (may Allāh be well pleased with her). He [Ibn ʿAbbās] said:

"'So I laid myself down to rest in a crosswise position on the cushion *[wisāda]*, while Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and his wife reclined on it lengthwise. Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) slept until the night was halfway through, or slightly before that point, or slightly after it. Then Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) awoke, sat up, and rubbed the sleep from his face with his hand. Then he recited the ten Qurʾānic verses *[āyāt]* that form the concluding section *[al-āyāt al-khawātīm]* of the Sūra of the Family of ʿImrān *[Sūrat Āl ʿImrān]*, beginning with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

[There are signs for] those	*alladhīna yadhkurūna*
who remember Allāh,	*'llāha qiyāman*
standing and sitting	*wa quʿūdan*
and on their sides, and who	*wa ʿalā junūbi-him*
reflect upon the creation	*wa yatafakkarūna*
of the heavens	*fī khalqi 's-samāwāti*
and the earth:	*wa 'l-arḍ:*
"Our Lord, You have not	*Rabba-nā mā khalaqta*
created this in vain.	*hādhā bāṭilā:*
Glory be to You! So guard	*subḥāna-ka fa-qi-nā*
us against the torment of the Fire."	*ʿadhāba 'n-nār.*
(3:191)	

—and ending with His words (Exalted is He):

O you who believe,	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna*
endure with patience,	*āmanu 'ṣbirū*
outdo all others	*wa ṣābirū*
in patient endurance, be ready,	*wa rābiṭū:*
and observe your duty to Allāh,	*wa 'ttaqu 'llāha*
in order that you may succeed	*laʿalla-kum tufliḥūn*
(3:200)	

"'Then he stood up, reached for a dangling waterskin, and drew water from it for his minor ablution *[wuḍūʾ]*, which he performed in a most thorough fashion. He then stood at the ready, and proceeded to perform the ritual prayer *[qāma fa-ṣallā]*.'"

"Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) went on to say: 'So I got up too, and did the same things that Allāh's

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone fasts on Wednesday *[ṣawm al-arbi'ā']*, Thursday *[al-khamīs]* and Friday *[al-jum'a]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will have a palatial mansion built for him in the Garden of Paradise, a palace made of pearls and sapphires and emeralds. Allāh (Exalted is He) will also have him recorded as one who enjoys immunity from the Fire of Hell.

In another pronouncement, also transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone fasts during three days in every month, namely, Thursday *[al-khamīs]*, Friday *[al-jum'a]*, and Saturday *[as-sabt]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will credit him with the worshipful service *['ibāda]* of nine hundred years.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Fast on Saturday *[ṣawm as-sabt]* and Sunday *[al-aḥad]*, and observe those days differently from the Jews *[al-Yahūd]* and the Christians *[an-Naṣārā]*!

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The gates of heaven are opened every Monday *[ithnain]* and Thursday *[khamīs]*. Allāh (Exalted is He) grants forgiveness, on each of those days, to every one of His servants who has not associated anything with Allāh (Exalted is He). The only exception is made in the case where bitter animosity *[shaḥnā']* exists between a man and his brother. Allāh (Exalted is He) says: "You must all pay attention to this pair, until they become reconciled with each other."

According to another traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never failed to fast on those two days [Monday and Thursday], regardless of whether he was at home or on a journey. He used to say:

> Monday and Thursday are two days on which the deeds of His servants are presented to Allāh (Exalted is He) for review.

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According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of 'Urwa, 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: "The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once heard a man reciting a Sūra [of the Qur'ān] during the night, so he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> 'May Allāh bestow His mercy upon him!' He has reminded me of such-and-such a verse *[āya]*, which I had omitted from the Sūra of such-and-such.'"

As for the amount of ritual prayer *[salāt]* the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to perform during the nighttime, we may cite the following traditional report, conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā':[24]

'Urwa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) said that 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once told him: "In the course of the night, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to perform thirteen cycles [of voluntary prayer] and the two cycles of the dawn prayer *[rak'atayi 'l-fajr]*."

It is also reported that, in the course of the night, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would perform twelve cycles of ritual prayer, then he would conclude the odd-numbered prayer *[awtara]* with a single cycle *[rak'a]*. According to some accounts, however, [he would perform not twelve but only] ten cycles, then he would conclude the odd-numbered prayer *[awtara]* with a single cycle *[rak'a]*.

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[24] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Abi'l-Fawaris—Ahmad ibn Yūsuf—Ahmad ibn Ibrahim ibn Malhan—Abū Bakr—al-Laith—Ibn Abī Habīb—'Arrāk—'Urwa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him)—'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

As for the agony and torment that exist in this world, these likewise constitute a model, which serves to represent the abode of punishment [in the Fire of Hell]. But then again, beyond all this, there is something that human minds are quite incapable of comprehending. In this case, that something is a whole assortment of unimaginable torments.

Whatever may lie in store for those who are condemned to the Fire of Hell, it will emerge to meet them out of His wrath, and whatever may lie in store for those who are worthy of the Garden of Paradise, it will emerge to greet them out of His mercy. For each and every one of His servants who has acquired no more than his lawful share of this world, and has thanked Him for it, He will provide a recompense in the Garden of Paradise—a recompense so great that his share of this world will seem quite tiny by comparison. By acquiring things that were not lawful to him, on the other hand, a person will deprive himself of his portion of the ascending levels [*darajāt*], and anyone who denies their very existence will be utterly deprived of the Garden of Paradise and all that it contains.

For those who are worthy to inhabit the Garden of Paradise, there will be brides [*'arā'is*] and wedding feasts [*walā'im*] and hospitable entertainments [*diyāfāt*]. The brides are for benefit of the single men [*di'wa*], for the very good reason that the Lord of Honor [*Rabb al-'Izza*] (Glory be to Him) has summoned them to the Abode of Peace [*Dār as-Salām*] in order that He may provide them with fresh new bodies and everlasting lives. The wedding feasts are for the benefit of the married partners, and the hospitable entertainments are for the reception of guests—to provide opportunities for the inhabitants of the Garden of Paradise to meet with one another, to exchange visits, and to converse in settings of intimate conviviality. They will have a gathering place in the shade of the Tree of Bliss [*Ṭūbā*],[129] where they will meet the Messengers [*Rusul*] and visit with them, as well as enjoying occasional sessions in the company of the angels (may the peace of Allāh be upon them all).

Other amenities available to them will include market places, where they can come and select various shapes and forms, and gifts from the

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[129] The *Ṭūbā* tree is traditionally depicted as having its roots in Paradise, while its leaves and branches extend downwards toward the earth. According to some accounts, one of its branches will enter the mansion of each inhabitant of the Garden of Paradise, bearing flowers and ripe fruit of every imaginable kind.

He has also said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

And as for the night, keep vigil	*wa mina 'l-laili fa-tahajjad*
during a part of it, as a supererogatory	*bi-hi nāfilatan la-k:*
work of devotion for you; it may be	*'asā an yab'atha-ka*
that your Lord will raise you up	*Rabbu-ka*
to a praiseworthy station. (17:79)	*maqāman maḥmūdā.*

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, Allāh assembles those of ancient times and those who came later, an angelic herald will cry out: "Let them now arise, all those whose sides used to shun their couches, as they called upon their Lord in fear and hope!" They will thereupon arise, but they will be very few.
>
> Then the herald will return, and this time he will cry: "Let them now arise, all those whom neither commerce nor trafficking diverted from the remembrance of Allāh!" They will thereupon arise, but they will be very few.
>
> The herald will then return again, and this time he will cry: "Let them now arise, all those who used to praise Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) in good times and in bad." They will thereupon arise, but they will be very few. The rest of the people will then be called to account in turn.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> You must take advantage of the pre-dawn meal *[ṭa'ām as-saḥar]*, to help you prepare for the daytime fasting, and of the daytime siesta *[qailūla]*, to help you prepare for the nighttime vigil *[qiyām al-lail]*. The addict of sleep will come away bankrupt *[muflis]*, and no one spends the whole length of the night asleep, unless the devil *[shaiṭān]* has pissed in his ear.

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would often repeat a Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* until the break of dawn, and 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) lay sleeping [close beside me] one night, until his skin became stuck to my skin, then he said: 'O 'Ā'isha, would you permit me to devote the night to worshipping my Lord?' So I told him: 'By Allāh, I love your nearness, but I prefer to respect your dearest wish.' He then stood erect (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and proceeded to recite the Qur'ān. He wept as he did so, until the upper parts of his chest were drenched with tears. Then he sat down and continued to recite, still weeping, until his sides and loins were drenched with tears. Then he lay down on the floor, still weeping and reciting, until the area next to the ground was also drenched with tears.[25]

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[25] For an essentially similar, yet interestingly different version of this lengthy report from 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), see Vol. 5, pp. 132–33.

father) once spent a night in the home of Maimūna, the Mother of the Believers *[Umm al-Mu'minīn]* (may Allāh be well pleased with her). He [Ibn 'Abbās] said:

"'So I laid myself down to rest in a crosswise position on the cushion *[wisāda]*, while Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and his wife reclined on it lengthwise. Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) slept until the night was halfway through, or slightly before that point, or slightly after it. Then Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) awoke, sat up, and rubbed the sleep from his face with his hand. Then he recited the ten Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]* that form the concluding section *[al-āyāt al-khawātīm]* of the Sūra of the Family of 'Imrān *[Sūrat Āl 'Imrān]*, beginning with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

[There are signs for] those	*alladhīna yadhkurūna*
who remember Allāh,	*'llāha qiyāman*
standing and sitting	*wa qu'ūdan*
and on their sides, and who	*wa 'alā junūbi-him*
reflect upon the creation	*wa yatafakkarūna*
of the heavens	*fī khalqi 's-samāwāti*
and the earth:	*wa 'l-arḍ:*
"Our Lord, You have not	*Rabba-nā mā khalaqta*
created this in vain.	*hādhā bāṭilā:*
Glory be to You! So guard	*subḥāna-ka fa-qi-nā*
us against the torment of the Fire."	*'adhāba 'n-nār.*
(3:191)	

—and ending with His words (Exalted is He):

O you who believe,	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna*
endure with patience,	*āmanu 'ṣbirū*
outdo all others	*wa ṣābirū*
in patient endurance, be ready,	*wa rābiṭū:*
and observe your duty to Allāh,	*wa 'ttaqu 'llāha*
in order that you may succeed	*la'alla-kum tufliḥūn*
(3:200)	

"'Then he stood up, reached for a dangling waterskin, and drew water from it for his minor ablution *[wuḍū']*, which he performed in a most thorough fashion. He then stood at the ready, and proceeded to perform the ritual prayer *[qāma fa-ṣallā]*.'"

"Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) went on to say: 'So I got up too, and did the same things that Allāh's

—until he reached:

What has deceived you concerning your Lord, the All-Generous? (82:6)	*mā gharra-ka* *bi-Rabbi-ka 'l-* *Karīm:*

"He paused at this point, but then he kept repeating this same recitation, over and over again, until a good part of the night had elapsed. So I went back home, and returned to his place when the light of dawn had appeared, only to find him still repeating it. When he noticed the light of dawn, he finally stopped. Then he said: 'Your tolerance and my ignorance! Your tolerance and my ignorance *[hilmu-ka wa jahli]*!' So I went away and left him.'"

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The winter is the springtime of the true believer *[mu'min]*. His day gets shorter, so he devotes it to fasting, and his night grows longer, so he devotes it to vigil.

It was Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "It should always be possible to recognize the reader of the Qur'ān: by his [vigil in the] nighttime, when other people are sleeping; by his [fasting in the] daytime, when other people are breaking fast; by his weeping, when other people are laughing; by his pious caution and restraint *[wara']*, when other people are freely mixing [the lawful with the dubious, or even with the unlawful]; by his humble and modest bearing, when other people are strutting about and parading their self-importance; by his sadness, when other people are behaving merrily; and by his remaining silent, when other people are plunging without hesitation into argument and gossip.

⁂

Concerning the special merit of the [voluntary] ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* performed between the two [prescribed] evening prayers *[al-'ishā'ain]*.[26]

Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' has informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,[27] that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs six cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer *[ṣallā sitta raka'āt]* after the [prescribed prayer of] sunset *[ba'da 'l-maghrib]*, without talking in the space between them, they will be counted as equal in merit to the worshipful service *['ibāda]* of twelve whole years.

In the traditional report *[ḥadīth]* of Zaid ibn al-Ḥabbāb, the wording is:

> —without talking about anything bad in the space between them....

In the first two cycles *[rak'atain]*, it has also been said, the worshipper is recommended to recite [the Sūras that begin with] "Say: 'O you unbelievers *[qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn]*.'"[28] and "Say: 'He is Allāh, One! *[qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad]*.'"[29] He should perform these first two cycles

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[26] That is to say, between the prescribed prayer of sunset *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]* and the prescribed prayer of the late evening *[ṣalāt al-'ishā' al-ākhira]*.

[27] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Abu'l-Fath Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Abi'l-Fawāris al-Hāfiz—Bishr—Muhammad ibn Sulaimān al-Maṣṣīṣī—Zaid ibn al-Ḥabbāb—'Umar ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn Khath'am—Yahyā ibn Abī Kathīr—Abū Salama—Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[28] This is the Sūra entitled "The Unbelievers *[al-Kāfirūn]*," which reads:

Say: "O unbelievers, I do not worship	*qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn*
that which you worship.	*lā a'budu mā ta'budūn*
And you do not worship that which I worship.	*wa lā antum 'ābidūna mā a'bud*
And I shall not worship that which you worship.	*wa lā ana 'ābidun mā 'abadtum*
Nor will you worship that which I worship.	*wa lā antum 'ābidūna mā a'bud*
To you your religion,	*la-kum dīnu-kum*
and to me my religion!" (109:1–6)	*wa liya dīn.*

[29] This is the Sūra of Sincere Devotion *[Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ]*, which reads:

Say: "He is Allāh, One!	*qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad:*
Allāh, the Everlasting Refuge!	*Allāhu 'ṣ-Ṣamad:*
He does not beget, nor was He begotten;	*lam yalid wa lam yūlad:*
and there is none	*wa lam yakun la-hu*
comparable unto Him." (112:1–4)	*kufuwan aḥad.*

quickly, because then, it is said, they will be raised up [to heaven] together with the sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*. Then, as he goes on to perform the rest of them, he may prolong any of their ingredients to whatever extent he wishes.

According to the traditional report *[ḥadīth]* of Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs six cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer *[ṣallā sitta rakaʿāt]*, after the [prescribed prayer of] sunset *[baʿda'l-maghrib]* and before he has talked to anybody, they will be raised up for him to the Highest Heaven *[ʿIlliyyīn]*. He will be just like someone who is present on the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* in the Farthest Mosque *[al-Masjid al-Aqṣā]*, and that is better than devoting half a night to vigil.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr,[40] Abū Bakr as-Ṣiddīq [the Champion of Truth] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "I heard the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> "'If someone performs the [prescribed] prayer of sunset *[maghrib]*, and then performs four [voluntary cycles] after it, he will be just like someone who performs one Pilgrimage after another *[man ḥajja baʿda Ḥijja]*.'

"So I asked him: 'What if he performs six [cycles] after it?' To this he replied:

> "'He will be forgiven the sins of fifty years.'"

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported[41] as having said:

> If someone secludes himself between the [prescribed prayers of] sunset and late evening *[baina 'l-maghrib wa 'l-ʿishā']*, in a congregational mosque *[masjid jamāʿa]*, and if he utters no speech at all, apart from [what is required] in performing a ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* or a Qur'ānic recitation, it will be incumbent upon Allāh to have two palatial mansions built for him in the Garden of Paradise. A tour of either of these mansions would take a hundred years to complete. In the area between them, He will cultivate a plantation vast enough to accommodate all the people of this world, if they happened to pay him a visit.

Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' has informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,[32] that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

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[40] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb—Abū Bakr as-Ṣiddīq** [the Champion of Truth] (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[41] **Author's note:** For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: **Saʿīd ibn Jubair—Thawbān** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

> No ritual prayer *[salāt]* is dearer to Allāh (Exalted is He) than the [prescribed] prayer of sunset *[salāt al-maghrib]*. With it the servant [of the Lord] begins his time of night, and with it he concludes his time of day. In no case may it be abbreviated, neither by the traveler *[musāfir]* nor by the resident *[muqīm]*.
>
> If a worshipper duly performs it, and then performs four [voluntary cycles] after it, without engaging in conversation while seated [in the interval], Allāh will have two palatial mansions built for him. Each of these will be crowned with pearls and sapphires, and in the area between them there will be Gardens of Paradise, the description whereof is known only to Allāh (Exalted is He).
>
> If a worshipper duly performs it, and then performs six [voluntary cycles] after it, without engaging in conversation while seated [in the interval], He will grant him forgiveness for [the sins of] forty years.

Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to perform twelve cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer between the two [prescribed] evening prayers *[baina 'l-'ishā'ain]*.

According to a report transmitted from 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her),[33] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a worshipper performs twenty [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer, between the [prescribed prayers of] sunset and late evening *[baina 'l-maghrib wa 'l-'ishā']*, Allāh will have a house built for him in the Garden of Paradise.

It is traditionally related that Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to perform [voluntary] ritual prayers between the [prescribed prayers of] sunset and late evening *[baina 'l-maghrib wa 'l-'ishā']*, and that he used to say: "It is the time when the night sets in *[nāshi'at al-lail]*."[34]

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[32] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Hishām ibn 'Urwa—'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[33] **Author's note:** For this report, the chain of transmission *[isnād]* goes back through the following links: Hishām ibn 'Urwa—his father—'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[34] Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was alluding to a verse *[āya]* in the Sūra of the Enshrouded One *[Sūrat al-Muzzammil]*, the 73rd Sūra of the Qur'ān:

The time when the night sets in is indeed	*inna nāshi'ata 'l-laili*
the time when impressions are strongest	*hiya ashaddu wat'an*
and speech most direct. (73:6)	*wa aqwamu qīlā.*

As related by ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn al-Aswad, his paternal uncle once said: "Not once did I pay a visit to ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Masʿūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him), without finding him performing the [voluntary] ritual prayer between the [prescribed prayers of] sunset and late evening [*baina 'l-maghrib wa 'l-ʿishāʾ*]. He used to say: 'It is [all too often] an hour of heedless neglect.'"[54]

It was during it [the interval between the sunset and late evening prayers], some say, that down came [the words of divine revelation]:

Their sides shun their couches, as they call on their Lord in fear and hope. (32:16)	*tatajāfā junūbu-hum ʿani 'l-maḍājiʿi* *yadʿūna Rabba-hum* *khaufan wa ṭamaʿā.*

According to another traditional report, transmitted on the authority of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Abī Awfā (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a worshipper recites, after the [prescribed prayer of] sunset [*maghrib*], [the Sūras beginning with]:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Alif, Lām, Mīm.
The revelation of the Book,
of which there is no doubt,
is from the Lord of All the Worlds. | *Alif–Lām–Mīm.*
tanzīlu 'l-Kitābi
lā raiba fī-hi
min Rabbi 'l-ʿālamīn. |
>
> —that is to say, the Sūra of Prostration [*Sūrat as-Sajda*],[55] and:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Blessed is He in whose Hand
is the Sovereignty.[56] | *tabāraka 'lladhī*
bi-yadi-hi 'l-mulk. |
>
> —when he comes forth on the Day of Resurrection [*Yaum al-Qiyāma*], his face will be like the moon on the night when it is at the full [*lailat al-badr*], and he will certainly do justice to that night."

Regarding these [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*rakaʿāt*], to which we find so many references in the traditional reports [*akhbār*], it is possible that they are meant to be kept separate from the two cycles of the regular customary prayer [*ar-rakʿatain as-sunna*],[57] though it is also possible that they are meant to be performed in combination with the latter.

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[55] The Sūra of Prostration [*Sūrat as-Sajda*] is the 32nd Sūra of the Qurʾān.

[56] This is the first verse [*āya*] of the Sūra of Sovereignty [*Sūrat al-Mulk*], the 67th Sūra of the Qurʾān.

[57] See pp. 141–46 below.

Concerning the two [voluntary] cycles *[rak'atān]* sometimes performed before the [prescribed] sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*.

Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was once asked about the two [voluntary] cycles *[rak'atān]* performed before the [prescribed] sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*. He responded by telling the questioner:

"As far as I am concerned, I do not perform them, but if any man does perform them, there is no harm in his doing so."

Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was also asked about the performance of those same two cycles of ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. He said in reply:

"I never saw anyone perform them during the lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)." It should be noted, however, that Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) did not forbid their performance.

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "During the lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), we used to perform two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[rak'atain]* after the setting of the sun *[ghurūb ash-shams]* and before the [prescribed] ritual prayer of sunset *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*." [The reporter said:] "So I asked him: 'Did Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also perform them?' To this he replied: 'Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) often saw us performing them, but he never directly instructed us to do so, nor did he ever tell us that the practice was forbidden.'"

It was Ibrāhīm an-Nakha'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Some of the very best of the Companions *[Aṣḥāb]* of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) were at one time based in Kūfa, including 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Ibn Mas'ūd, Ḥudhaifa ibn al-Yamān, ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, Abū Mas‘ūd al-Ansārī and others (may Allāh be well pleased with them all)—and I never saw a single one of them performing a ritual prayer before the [prescribed prayer of] sunset *[qabla 'l-maghrib]*. Nor were these two particular cycles *[rak‘atain]* ever performed by Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, or ‘Uthmān (may Allāh be well pleased with them all)."

More traditional reports concerning the [voluntary] ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* performed between the two [prescribed] evening prayers *[al-ʿishāʾain]*,with special reference to the vision of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Abū Ṭība Karaz ibn Wabra al-Ḥārithī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was one of the *Abdāl* [Spiritual Deputies].[38] He is reported[39] as having said:

"I once received a visit from a spiritual brother of mine, an inhabitant of the region of Damascus, who presented me with a gift. 'O Karaz,' he said to me, 'accept from me this gift, for it is truly an excellent present!' So I asked him: 'O my brother, and who gave you this gift?' To this he replied: 'It was given to me by Ibrāhīm at-Taimī (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him),' so I said: 'Well, did you ask Ibrāhīm who gave this gift to him?' 'Yes, of course,' said he, then he told me the following story:

"'I was sitting in the area in front of the Kaʿba [in Mecca], and I was engrossed in affirming the Uniqueness of Allāh *[tahlīl]*,[40] in proclaiming His Glory *[tasbīḥ]*,[41] and in offering praise to Him *[taḥmīd]*.[42] Then a man came up to me, greeted me with the salutation of peace *[sallama*

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[38] In the Sixth Discourse of *Revelations of the Unseen [Futūḥ al-Ghaib]*, Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) gives the following explanation of the term *Abdāl*:

Annihilation *[fanāʾ]* is the aim and object, the final destination of the journey of the saints. This was the direction sought by all previous saints and *Abdāl*: to become extinct to their own will, and let the will of the Almighty and Glorious Truth take its place, as a permanent transformation, lasting until death. That is why they came to be called *Abdāl* [lit. 'substitutes'] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all).

[39] ***Author's note:*** For this report, the chain of transmission goes back through the following links: **ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ḥabīb al-Ḥārithī al-Baṣrī—Saʿīd ibn Saʿd—Abū Ṭība Karaz ibn Wabra al-Ḥārithī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).**

[40] See note 10 on p. 9 above.

[41] See note 11 on p. 9 above.

[42] The Arabic verb *ḥammada*, of which *taḥmīd* is the corresponding verbal noun, means "to extol Allāh, by saying: 'Praise be to Allāh *[al-ḥamdu liʾllāh]*.'"

'alayya], and seated himself to my right. Well, never in all my days had I seen anyone more handsome in facial features, more handsome in style of attire, more fragrantly perfumed, or with a fairer complexion. So I said: 'O servant of Allāh, who are you? Where do you come from, and what are you?' He replied: 'I am al-Khiḍr.[43] I have come to say, "Peace be upon you," and because I have a feeling of love toward you, for the sake of Allāh. I also come bearing a gift, which I intend to present to you.'

"'Well then,' said I, 'please tell me about this gift of yours. What is it?' To this al-Khiḍr (peace be upon him) replied: 'You must recite the following, before the sun rises and spreads its light over the earth, and also before it sets:

- The Sūra of Praise *[Sūrat al-Ḥamd]*[44]—seven times.
- The Sūra that begins with:

Say: "I take refuge with the Lord of mankind." (114:1)	*qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'n-nās.*

—seven times.

- The Sūra that begins with:

Say: "I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak." (113:1)	*qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'l-falaq.*

—seven times.

- The Sūra that begins with:

Say: "He is Allāh, One!" (112:1)	*qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad.*

—seven times.

- The Sūra that begins with:

Say: "O unbelievers...." (109:1)	*qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn.*

—seven times.

- The Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[45]—seven times.

You must also say:

• Glory be to Allāh!	*subḥāna 'llāh.*
• Praise be to Allāh!	*al-ḥamdu li'llāh.*

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[43] See Vol. 2, note 87 on p. 63.

[44] The Sūra of Praise *[Sūrat al-Ḥamd]* is another name for the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]*, which begins with the verse *[āya]*:

Praise be to Allāh, Lord of All the Worlds.	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn*

[45] Q. 2:255.

• There is no god but Allāh!	*lā ilāha illa 'llāh.*
• Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*

—seven times.

You must invoke blessings upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)—seven times.

You must seek forgiveness for yourself, for your parents, and for all the believing men [*mu'minīn*] and all the believing women [*mu'mināt*]—seven times.

Immediately after the appeal for forgiveness [*istighfār*], you must say:

O Allāh, my Lord, do with us	*Allāhumma Rabbi 'f'al bī*
and with them,	*wa bi-him*
both in the short term	*'ājilan*
and in the long term,	*wa ājilan*
in matters of religion,	*fi 'd-dīni*
this world and the hereafter,	*wa 'd-dunyā wa 'l-ākhirati*
that of which You are Capable.	*mā Anta la-hu Ahl:*
Do not do with us, O our Master,	*wa lā taf'al bi-nā yā Mawlā-nā*
that of which we are capable!	*mā naḥnu la-hu ahl:*
You are Forgiving, Forbearing,	*inna-ka Ghafūrun Ḥalīmun*
Generous, Noble, Kind,	*Jawādun Karīmun Barrun*
Gentle, Compassionate	*Ra'ūfun Raḥīm.*

—seven times.

"'See to it that you carry out this practice without fail, both in the morning and in the evening, for he who gave it to me told me: "You must say it at least once in your lifetime." When I said to him: 'I would like you to tell me who gave you this gift,' he said: 'It was Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who gave it to me.'

"I then said to al-Khiḍr (peace be upon him): 'Tell me something. Suppose I see the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in one of my dreams, should I ask him if he gave you this gift?' So he said to me: 'Are you doubting my veracity?' I said: 'No, by Allāh, but I would love to hear that directly from Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).'

"He then told me: 'If you wish to see the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in one of your dreams, this is what you need to know: As soon as you have performed the [prescribed] prayer of sunset [*ṣallaita 'l-maghrib*], you must proceed to perform [voluntary] ritual prayers until the time of the [prescribed prayer] of late evening [*al-'ishā'* *al-ākhira]*, without talking to any human being. You must concentrate on the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* in which you are engaged. You must pronounce the salutation *[taslīma]* after each set of two cycles *[rak'atain]*. In the course of each cycle *[rak'a]*, you must complete the following Qur'ānic recitations:

- the Sūra of Praise *[Sūrat al-Ḥamd]*[46]—one time only, and
- the Sūra that begins with:

Say: "He is Allāh, One!" (112:1)	*qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad*

—seven times.

You must then perform the [prescribed] ritual prayer of late evening *[ṣalāt al-'atama]*,[47] as a member of the congregation *[jamā'a]*. On no account must you talk to anyone [after that], until you reach your own place of residence, and there perform the odd-numbered prayer *[ṣalāt al-witr]*. You must also perform two cycles of prayer *[rak'atain]* at the point where you are about to take your sleep, reciting in each cycle *[rak'a]*:

- the Sūra of Praise *[Sūrat al-Ḥamd]*, and
- the Sūra that begins with:

Say: "He is Allāh, One!" (112:1)	*qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad.*

—seven times.

Then you must perform an act of prostration, after the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. While in your posture of prostration *[sujūd]*, you must seek forgiveness of Allāh (Exalted is He)—seven times. You must also say:

• Glory be to Allāh!	*subḥāna 'llāh.*
• Praise be to Allāh!	*al-ḥamdu li'llāh.*
• There is no god but Allāh!	*lā ilāha illa 'llāh.*
• Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*
• There is no might	*lā ḥawla*
nor any power except	*wa lā quwwata illā*
with Allāh, the All-High,	*bi'llāhi 'l-'Aliyyi 'l-*
the Almighty.	*'Aẓīm.*

—seven times.

Then you must raise your head from the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*, hold yourself steady in a sitting position, lift up your hands, and say:

O Ever-Living One,	*yā Ḥayyu*
O Self-Sustaining One!	*yā Qayyūm.*

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[46] See note 44 on p. 34 above.

[47] The term *ṣalāt al-'atama* is synonymous with *ṣalāt al-'ishā' al-ākhira*. See p. 139 below.

O Possessor of Majesty and Honor!	*yā Dha 'l-Jalāli wa 'l-Ikrām*
O God of the first and the last [of mankind]!	*yā Ilāha 'l-awwalīna wa 'l-ākhirīn*
O All-Merciful of this world	*yā Raḥmāna 'd-dunyā*
and the hereafter,	*wa 'l-ākhira*
and All-Compassionate of both worlds!	*wa Raḥīma-humā*
O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!	*yā Rabb yā Rabb yā Rabb.*
O Allāh, O Allāh, O Allāh!	*yā Allāh yā Allāh yā Allāh*

"'Then you must stand erect, and repeat the same invocations in your upright posture *[qiyām]*. Then you must prostrate yourself again, and repeat the same invocations in your posture of prostration *[sujūd]*. Then you must raise your head. At this point, you may lie down to sleep wherever you wish, facing the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba] and invoking blessings on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). You must keep this up until sleep overwhelms you.'

"I said to him [to al-Khiḍr (peace be upon him)]: 'I would like you to tell me from whom you heard this prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*.' So he said to me: 'Are you doubting my veracity?' I said: 'By the One who sent Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) as a Prophet bearing the Truth *[bi'l-Ḥaqqi Nabiyyan]*, I am not doubting your veracity.' He then went on (peace be upon him) to tell me: 'I was in the presence of Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) when he was taught this prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*, and I was beside him when it was entrusted to him, so I learned it from the One who taught it to him.'"

"Ibrāhīm continued: 'So I said to him: "Tell me about the spiritual reward of this prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*," and al-Khiḍr (peace be upon him) told me: "When you meet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), you should ask him about its spiritual reward."'"

"Ibrāhīm went on to say: 'So I did what al-Khiḍr (peace be upon him) had told me to do. I kept invoking blessings upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) while I lay in my bed, and sleep departed from me, due to my intense delight with all that al-Khiḍr (peace be upon him) had taught me, and the hope of meeting the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). I was still in that state when morning came, so I performed the [prescribed] ritual prayer of dawn *[ṣalātu 'l-fajr]*, then sat in my prayer niche *[miḥrāb]* until the full light of day had appeared. Then I performed the [voluntary] forenoon prayer *[ṣalātu 'd-ḍuḥā]*, saying to myself: "If I am still alive tonight, I shall do this all over again, just as I did it last night!"

"'It was then that sleep overwhelmed me, and the angels came and carried me away. They took me inside the Garden of Paradise, where I saw palatial mansions built of red rubies, and palatial mansions built of green emeralds, and palatial mansions built of white pearls. I also saw rivers of honey and milk and wine. In one of those palatial mansions, I saw a maiden looking down at me, and I noticed that the radiance of her face was brighter than the light of the unclouded sun. She had locks of hair that fell to the ground, all the way down from the top of the palatial mansion. So I asked the angels who had brought me inside: "To whom does this palace belong, and to whom does this maiden belong?" They replied: "To someone who performs the kind of good work you perform."

"'Needless to say, they did eventually remove me from those Gardens of Paradise, but not until they had given me some of its fruits to eat, and quenched my thirst with some of that refreshing drink. Only then did they take me away, and return me to the spot where I had been before.

"'It was then that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) came to me, accompanied by seventy Prophets and seventy rows of angels, each row extending all the way from the East to the West. He greeted me with the salutation of peace *[sallama ʿalayya]*, and took me by my hand, so I said: "O Messenger of Allāh (may Allāh bless you and give you peace!), al-Khidr has told me that he heard this saying *[ḥadīth]* from you." The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded to this by saying: "Yes, al-Khidr has told you the truth, but then every story he tells is always true. He is the savant *[ʿālim]* of the people of the earth. He is the chieftain of the Spiritual Deputies *[ra'īs al-Abdāl]*, and he is one of Allāh's soldiers *[junūd]* upon the earth."

"'I then said: "O Messenger of Allāh, if someone does exactly as I have done, yet does not see what I have seen in my dream, will he nevertheless be given something of that which I have been given?" To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "By the One who sent me as a Prophet bearing the Truth *[bi'l-Ḥaqqi Nabiyyan]*, that person will surely receive forgiveness for all the major sins *[kabā'ir]* he has ever committed, and Allāh will relieve him of His anger and His displeasure.

By the One who sent me as a Prophet bearing the Truth *[bi'l-Ḥaqqi Nabiyyan]*, if anyone matches this performance [of yours], even if he does not see the Garden of Paradise in one of his dreams, he will surely be given something comparable to that which you have been given.

"'"An angelic herald will proclaim in the heaven above: "Allāh has already granted forgiveness, not only to the one who has worked so hard for his [the Prophet's] sake, but to his entire Community *[Umma]* (Allāh bless him and give him peace), consisting of all the believing men *[mu'minīn]* and believing women *[mu'mināt]* in the East and in the West. [The recording angel called] the Companion of the Left *[Ṣāḥib ash-Shimāl]* will be instructed not to record anything against any one of them, in the way of misdeeds, until the year that lies ahead."'"

"Ibrāhīm continued further: 'So then I said to him: "Let my father and my mother be your ransom, O Messenger of Allāh! By the One who has allowed me to behold your beauty, and has shown me the Garden of Paradise, am I to understand that this will be that person's spiritual reward?" He said: "Yes, he will be given all of that!" So I said: "O Messenger of Allāh, it is surely most important for all the believing men *[mu'minīn]* and believing women *[mu'mināt]* to learn this practice, and to teach it to others, since it is endowed with spiritual reward and merit of such magnitude!"

"'The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied: "By the One who sent me as a Prophet bearing the Truth *[bi'l-Ḥaqqi Nabiyyan]*, no one can do this, unless Allāh has created him as a fortunate individual, and no one can neglect to do it, unless Allāh has created him as an unlucky wretch." So I said: "O Messenger of Allāh, will anything else be given to someone who performs this work?"

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied: "By the One who sent me as a Prophet bearing the Truth *[bi'l-Ḥaqqi Nabiyyan]*, if someone performs this work for just one night, good deeds will be record in his favor, to the count of every drop of rain that has fallen from the sky, from the moment when Allāh created this world till the Day [of Resurrection] when the blast shall be blown on the Trumpet. By the same token, bad deeds will be erased from his record, to the number of every seed that has ever grown in the earth. These benefits will accrue to him, as well as to all the believing men *[mu'minīn]* and believing women *[muʾmināt]* who have put this advice into practice, whether in ancient or in later times.”’”

As reported by al-Aʿraj, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a worshipper performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[sallā rakʿatain]* on the night of Friday, the Day of Congregation *[lailat al-Jumʿa]*, reciting in each cycle *[rakʿa]*:
>
> • the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātihat al-Kitāb]* and the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*
>
> —one time only, and:
>
> • the Sūra that begins with:
>
> Say: “He is Allāh, One!” (112:1) *qul Huwa 'llāhu Ahad.*
>
> —fifteen times, and if he says, at the end of his ritual prayer *[salāt]*:
>
> O Allāh, bless Muhammad, *Allāhumma salli ʿalā*
> the unlettered Prophet! *Muhammadini 'n-Nabiyyi 'l-ummī.*
>
> —one thousand times, he will see me in one of his dreams. What is more, he will see me before the next Friday *[Jumʿa]* is over. If someone sees me [in one of his dreams], it means that he is assured of the Garden of Paradise, and that he will be forgiven his former and his later sins.

* * *

will cry out: "The curse of Allāh	*baina-hum an la'natu 'llāhi*
is on the evildoers!" (7:44)	*'ala 'ẓ-ẓālimīn.*

Then the traditional report goes on to tell us:

> At this point, those who used to be despised will curse those who were proud, and those who were proud will curse those who used to be despised. All of them will curse the devils who are their fellow inmates, and their fellow inmates will curse them in return. Then they will say to those fellow inmates of theirs: "If only we were separated from you by the distance that separates the two horizons from each other—for you are evil companions[352] for us today, just as you were evil ministers *[wuzarā']* for us in the lower world."
>
> When it finally dawns on them that they are all lumped together in a single congregation, they will start saying to one another: "Come on! Let us go and look for the custodians of this place. Perhaps they will intercede on our behalf in the presence of their Lord, so that He may relieve us of the torment for a day."[353]

The traditional report continues further:

> In spite of this, however, they will continue to suffer torment. The keepers of Hell will stay out of their reach for as long as seventy years, and then, when they eventually come around to them, they will say:

"Did your Messengers not come	*a-wa-lam taku ta'tī-kum*
to you with clear proofs?" (40:50)	*rusulu-kum bi-'l-baiyināt.*

> "Yes indeed,"[354] they will all respond together, whereupon the keepers of Hell will say:

"Then make your plea,	*fa-'d'ū:*
although the pleading	*wa mā du'ā'u 'l-kāfirīna*
of the unbelievers is in vain."	*illā fī ḍalāl.*
(40:50)	

Then, according to the same traditional report:

> When they see that the keepers of Hell will not do them any good, they will turn to the angel Mālik[355] with their next appeal for help, as they cry:
>
> "O Mālik, let your Lord make an end of us! (43:77) Let Him finally put us to death!"

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[352] Up to this point, the sentence beginning "If only..." is almost identical—except that the pronouns and one noun are in the plural instead of the singular—with the Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* in which Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

Till, when he comes to Us, he says:	*ḥattā idhā jā'a-nā qāla*
"If only I were separated from you	*yā laita*
by the distance that separates	*bainī wa baina-ka*
the two horizons from each other—	*bu'da 'l-mashriqaini:*
for you are an evil companion." (43:38)	*fa-bi'sa 'l-qarīn.*

[353] *yukhaffif 'an-nā yauman mina 'l-'adhāb.* This last phrase in the sentence is a direct quotation from the Qur'ān (40:49).

[354] The response "Yes indeed *[balā]*!" is a quotation from the same verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān (40:50).

[355] The literal meaning of the Arabic word *mālik* is 'someone in authority; an owner or possessor.' Mālik is the name of the angel who presides over Hell, superintending the torments inflicted on its occupants.

Concerning the nighttime prayer called *witr*,[50] and the time of night most suitable for its performance.

As for the nighttime prayer called *witr* ["odd-numbered"], the time most suitable for its performance must be the last part of the night, in view of all that has been explained above, concerning the special merit of keeping vigil *[qiyām]* during the last part of the night. For further confirmation of this, we may adduce the following evidence:

As we learn from one traditional report, transmitted by Nāfiʿ on the authority of Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), a man once asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about [the ritual prayer performed during] the night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]*, so he said:

> [The nighttime ritual prayer should be performed] in sets of two cycles *[mathnā mathnā]*, so, if you are afraid [of not finishing before] the dawn, one [separate cycle] will make what has preceded it count as your *witr*.

ʿUmar al-Fārūq (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to perform the *witr* prayer during the last part of the night, whereas Abū Bakr as-Siddīq [the Champion of Truth] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) performed his *witr* during the first part of the night. This came to the notice of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so he asked the two of them about it.

"When do you perform the *witr* prayer?" he said first to Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him), and the latter replied: "In the first part of the night, before I go to sleep." Then he asked 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "When do you perform the *witr* prayer?" and he received the answer: "During the last part of the night." The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then said, with reference to Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "This one is cautious," and with reference to 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "This one is strong."

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[50] The term *witr* [lit., odd number] is used to denote the ritual prayer, consisting of an odd number of cycles, that is performed after the late evening prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ]* and before the dawn of day *[ṣubḥ]*. The number of cycles is usually three, five, or seven, but may be as many as thirteen. Performance of the *witr* prayer is considered customary *[sunna]* by most traditional authorities, with the exception of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who took a stricter view. According to the Ḥanafī school *[madhhab]* of Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]*, the observance of the *witr* prayer is classed as necessary *[wājib]*. (See: A.J. Wensinck, art. WITR in *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islām*, and Thomas Patrick Hughes, *Dictionary of Islām*, art. WITR.)

'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having said: "The shrewd ones *[akyās]* perform the *witr* prayer during the first part of the night, while the stong *[aqwiyā']* perform it during the last part of the night, and the latter practice is more meritorious." There are some who maintain, however, that the first part of the night is actually more meritorious, in view of the practice of Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

'Uthmān [ibn 'Affān] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "As for myself, I perform the *witr* prayer during the first part of the night. If I wake up [later], I perform one cycle of ritual prayer *[rak'a]*, thereby converting my [odd-numbered] *witr* into part of an even-numbered set. I can only compare it to a stray she-camel, whom I am reuniting with her sisters. Then I perform an odd cycle at the very end of my ritual prayer *[salāt]*." It is widely known, in fact, that he made it his practice (may Allāh be well pleased with him) to keep vigil throughout the whole of the night, while performing one single cycle of prayer *[rak'a]*, in which he would recite the entire Qur'ān. That was his *witr* prayer.

Abū Huraira is reported as having said: "My bosom friend *[khalīlī]*, Abu'l-Qāsim[51] (Allāh bless him and give him peace) alerted me to the value of three practices: (1) the *witr* prayer before going to sleep, (2) devoting three days out of every month to fasting, and (3) the two cycles of the forenoon prayer *[rak'atayi 'd-duhā]*. [The early performance of the *witr* is recommended] especially in the case of someone who is afraid of not waking up until after the rising of the dawn, since the best course for him is to sleep on the *witr*."

'Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "The *witr* can be approached from any of these three angles: (1) If you wish, you may perform an odd number of prayer-cycles in the first part of the night, then [perform any later nighttime prayers in] sets of two cycles *[rak'atain rak'atain]*. (2) If you wish, you may perform one single cycle *[rak'a]* as a *witr* prayer [before going to sleep]. Then, if you wake up [later in the night], you may add another to it [to make an even pair]. You may then perform an odd number of cycles during the last part of the night. (3) If you wish, you may postpone the *witr* until the very end of your [nighttime performance of the] ritual prayer *[salāt]*."

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[51] Abu'l-Qāsim [the Father of al-Qāsim] is one of the names of the Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), assumed in memory of his son, who died in infancy

As reported on the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone is afraid that he may not wake up during the last part of the night, let him perform the *witr* prayer in the first part of the night, then let him go to sleep. On the other hand, if someone has a strong urge to get up during the last part of the night, let him postpone it [till then]. Vigil in the last part of the night is a practice restricted [to a few], and therefore more meritorious.

'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: "As soon as Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had performed his *witr* prayer, in the last part of the night, he would approach his wives, if he needed to do so; otherwise, he would lie down and take a nap in his place of prayer *[muṣallā]*, until Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him) arrived to summon him with the call to prayer."

'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) also said: "Of the night as a whole, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) sometimes performed the *witr* prayer in the first part, and sometimes in the middle section, and the very latest time for his *witr* was toward the pre-dawn interlude *[saḥar]*."

According to one traditional report *[khabar]*, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would perform the *witr* at the time of the [pre-dawn] call to prayer *[adhān]*, then he would perform the two [customary] cycles *[rak'atain]* at the time of the final announcement *[iqāma]* [immediately before the prescribed prayer of daybreak].

The Companions *[Aṣḥāb]* of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would perform the [prescribed] prayer of late evening *[al-'ishā']*, then they would perform two [voluntary] cycles *[rak'atain]*, then four [more of the same]. After that, if anyone saw fit to do so, he would perform the *witr* prayer, and if anyone was ready for sleep, he would go to sleep.

Two opinions concerning the annulment of the *witr* prayer, when someone performs it in the first part of the night, then proceeds to perform the prayers called *tahajjud*.[52]

If someone performs the *witr* prayer during the first part of the night, then gets up [after some sleep] to perform the prayers called *tahajjud*, must he annul his *witr*, or may he perform whatever additional prayers he wishes, without annulling the *witr*? On this question, there are two conflicting versions of the doctrine attributed to Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

According to one account, he is not required to invalidate the *witr*. In the version related by al-Faḍl ibn Ziyād, he [Imām Aḥmad] said: "While performance of the *witr* during the last part of the night is more meritorious, it may happen that a man is afraid of sleeping [through that period], in which case he ought to perform the *witr* during the first part of the night. Then, if he does get up during the last part of the night, he should perform the ritual prayer in sets of two cycles *[rakʿatain rakʿatain]*, but he should not perform the *witr* again." According to the other account, however, he must actually render it invalid.

"I once asked Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal]," said al-Faḍl ibn Ziyād: 'Do you see him as having to invalidate the *witr*?' 'No,' he replied, 'and even if he must render it invalid, that is hardly a serious problem. ʿUmar, ʿAlī, Usāma, Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn ʿAbbās and Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with them)—all of them did that!'"

Here is a step-by-step description of what is involved in the invalidation

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[52] The term *tahajjud* is sometimes synonymous with *salāt al-lail* [the prayer of night vigil]. In some contexts, however, it refers to the voluntary prayers performed after the compulsory prayer of late evening *[salāt al-ʿishāʾ]*. The corresponding verb, in the imperative form *tahajjad*, occurs in Q. 17:78 and 17:79.

[naqd] and annulment *[faskh]* of the *witr* prayer [as a separate, odd-numbered entity]:

- The person concerned performs the *witr* in the first part of the night, as a ritual prayer consisting of one single cycle.
- He goes to sleep.
- He gets up in the course of the night, in order to perform more ritual prayers.
- He performs one single cycle of ritual prayer *[rak'a wāḥida]*, with the specific intention that it should invalidate [the separate, odd-numbered status of] his previous *witr*, and convert it into the first of two elements forming a pair.
- He pronounces the concluding salutation [to mark the completion of this latest cycle of prayer], so now all his prayers up to this point have become even-numbered.
- He may then go on to perform further prayers, as many as he wishes, so long as they are in sets of two cycles *[mathnā mathnā]*.
- Finally, he may perform the *witr* before the rising of the dawn *[ṭulū' al-fajr]*, by completing one single, unpaired cycle of ritual prayer *[rak'a wāḥida]*.

That is all quite clear, in light of the practice of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), which we have described above [in the preceding subsection.]

It is not permissible to leave the first *witr* in its original condition, and then perform the *witr* a second time, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> There must not be two performances of the *witr* in a single night.

As for the case where someone does not render his *witr* invalid, but simply goes on to perform whatever [even-numbered] prayers he wishes, we have already explained the permissibility thereof.

◆

Concerning the supplication *[du'ā']* to be offered at a certain point in the *witr* prayer.

In the final cycle *[rak'a]* of the *witr* prayer, at the point where he raises his head from the bowing posture *[rukū']*, the worshipper should offer the following supplication *[du'ā']*:

O Allāh, we appeal to You for help,	*Allāhumma innā nasta'īnu-ka*
and guidance, and forgiveness.	*wa nastahdī-ka wa nastaghfiru-ka*
We believe in You,	*wa nu'minu bi-ka*
and in You we place all our trust.	*wa natawakkalu 'alai-ka*
We extol You	*wa nuthnī*
for all that is good.	*'alai-ka 'l-khaira kulla-hu*
We give thanks to You,	*nashkuru-ka*
and we are not ungrateful to You.	*wa lā nakfuru-ka*
We dismiss and abandon those	*wa nakhla'u wa natruku*
who sinfully disobey You.	*man yafjuru-ka*

O Allāh, You Alone do we worship.	*Allāhumma iyyā-ka na'budu*
To You we pray	*wa la-ka nuṣallī*
and make prostration,	*wa nasjudu*
and we are quick to serve	*wa ilai-ka nas'ā*
and obey You.	*wa naḥfidu*
We hope for Your mercy	*narjū raḥmata-ka*
and we dread Your chastisement.	*wa nakhshā 'adhāba-ka*
Surely Your extreme chastisement	*inna 'adhāba-ka 'l-jidda*
will be applied to the unbelievers.	*bi'l-kuffāri mulḥaq*

O Allāh, guide me among those	*Allāhumma 'hdi-nī*
whom You have guided aright.	*fī-man hadaita*
Pardon me among those	*wa 'āfi-nī*
to whom You have granted pardon.	*fī-man 'āfaita*
Take care of me among those	*wa tawalla-nī*
of whom You have taken care.	*fī-man tawallaita*
Bless me among those	*wa bārik lī*
to whom You have	*fī-man*
granted Your blessing,	*a'ṭaita*
and guard me against the evil	*wa qi-nī sharra*
of that which You have decreed.	*mā qaḍaita*
Surely You make judgment,	*inna-ka taqḍī*

and judgment is not	*wa lā yuqḍā*
made against You.	*'alai-k.*
Those whom You treat as friends	*inna-hu lā yadhillu*
are surely not to be despised,	*man wālaita*
and those whom You	*wa lā*
treat as enemies	*ya'izzu*
are not worthy of respect.	*man 'ādaita*
Blessed are You, Our Lord,	*tabārakta Rabba-nā*
and Exalted are You!	*wa ta'ālait.*
O Allāh, I take refuge	*Allāhumma innī a'ūdhu*
with Your good pleasure	*bi-riḍā-ka*
from Your disapproval,	*min sukhṭi-ka*
and with Your pardon	*wa bi-'afwi-ka*
from Your punishment,	*min 'uqūbati-ka*
and I take refuge with You	*wa a'ūdhu bi-ka*
from You!	*min-ka*
I can never extol You enough, for	*lā uḥṣī thanā'an 'alai-ka*
You are as You have	*Anta ka-mā athnaita*
extolled Yourself.	*'alā Nafsi-k.*

If the supplicant chooses to add more to this, it is permissible for him to do so. He should then pass his hand over his face, according to one of two accounts [of the Ḥanbalī doctrine]. According to the other, he should pass it over his breast.

If he is acting as prayer leader *[imām]* in the month of Ramaḍān, he must use the first-person plural in every appropriate instance, saying: "Guide *us* and grant *us* well-being *[ihdi-***nā** *wa 'āfi-***nā***]*," and so on through to the end of the supplication.

⁂

Concerning the best course to be followed by someone who is overcome by drowsiness *[nuʿās]*, while devoting the night to ritual prayer *[yuṣalli 'l-lail]*.

If a worshipper is one of those who devote the night to ritual prayer *[yuṣalli 'l-lail]*, but he is overcome by drowsiness *[nuʿās]*, the best course for him is to get some sleep. This advice is based on the traditional report, recorded in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ*'s,[53] according to which ʿĀ'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) said that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If one of you is overcome by drowsiness, while performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, let him lie down to rest until sleep departs from him, for, if he prays while he is feeling drowsy, perhaps he will go away to seek forgiveness, since he may attribute the blame to himself.

As reported on the authority of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Ṣuhaib, it was Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once entered the mosque *[masjid]*, where he noticed that a rope had been strung between the two columns. 'What is this?' he exclaimed, so they told him: 'It was put there for Zainab to use, while she is performing the ritual prayer. Whenever she feels sluggish or listless, she grasps it with her hand.' He said: 'Unfasten it!' Then he went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'Let each one of you perform the prayer while he has the energy *[nashāṭ]* for it, then, if he feels too sluggish or listless, let him sit down and take a rest.'"

According to a report from ʿUrwa, ʿĀ'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once had with her a woman from the tribe of Banī Asad. When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) came in, he asked: "Who is this?" She said: "This is so-and-so, who never sleeps in the night." It was then that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

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[53] See n. 14 on p. 12 above.

> All of you must do as much work as you are capable of doing, for, by Allāh, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has never had enough until you have had enough!

ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: "The work that is dearest to Allāh (Exalted is He) is that which is pursued with diligence and perseverance by its practitioner, even if it does not amount to very much. Whenever Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) instructed them to do as much work and they were capable of doing, they [his Companions] used to say: 'O Messenger of Allāh, we are not in the same situation as you. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has forgiven you your earlier and your later sins.' This would make him feel so angry that it showed on his face."

It can thus be stated that, in the case of a worshipper who is overwhelmed by sleep, to the point where it distracts him from the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] and the remembrance of Allāh [*dhikr*], the Sunna[54] requires him to sleep until he is relieved of the burden of slumber, so that he feels completely ready for worshipful service [*ʿibāda*], and can fully understand what he is saying.

Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is said to have disapproved of sleep in a sitting position.

In the words of one traditional report [*khabar*], we are told: "Do not challenge the night [by trying to go through it without any sleep at all]."

Among the righteous [*ṣāliḥīn*] there were some who deliberately trained themselves to sleep [at an early time], in order to be fortified thereby in the middle of the night. There were others who disapproved of any deliberate attempt to sleep, and who did not sleep at all until slumber overwhelmed them with irresistible force.

It is said that Wahb ibn Munabbih al-Yamānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) did not once lay his side on the ground, in all of thirty years. He kept a cushion [*miswara*] made of leather, on which he would place his breast, when sleep overwhelmed him. Then, after dozing off for a few minutes [*khafaqa khafaqāt*], he would wake up with a start and resume his vigil. He would often say: "I would much prefer to see a devil [*shaiṭān*] in my house, rather than to see a pillow [*wisāda*] in it." (By this he meant: "because the pillow would represent an invitation to sleep.")

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[54] The Sunna is the customary practice established by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). See also n. 57 on p. 52 below.

Imām Mālik ibn Anas (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) also said: "It has come to my attention that Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib[243] once said: 'If someone is present at the late evening prayer *[salāt al-'ishā']* on the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*, he will derive good fortune therefrom.'

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If someone performs both the late evening *['ishā']* and sunset *[maghrib]* prayers in congregation, he will obtain his share of good fortune from the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*. Moreover, if he recites it—meaning the Sūra of Power *[Sūrat al-Qadr]*—it will be as if he had recited one fourth of the entire Qur'ān.[244]

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[243] Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib [or, al-Musayyab] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was an early scholar of Prophetic tradition. He died in A.H. 93. (There is some uncertainty as to the correct spelling of his last name. The forms *ibn al-Musayyib* and *ibn al-Musayyab* both occur, often in the same text.)

[244] **Author's note:** It is a recommended practice for the worshipper to recite the Sūra of Power *[Sūrat al-Qadr]* in the final late evening prayer *['ishā']* of the month of Ramadān.

That could be the time it takes to perform four cycles of prayer [*rakaʿāt*], or it may only be enough for two cycles [*rakʿatain*].

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Two cycles of ritual prayer [*rakʿatain*], performed by the servant [of the Lord] in the middle of the night, are better than this world and all that it contains. But for the hardship it would have caused my Community [*Ummatī*], I would have made them obligatory.

All of this was intended to make it easy for his Community [*Umma*] to keep night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*] and to practice worshipful service [*ʿibāda*]. He did not wish it to be burdensome for them, and for worshipful service to be unpleasant for them, so that they would become weary and bored. Far from it! He simply steered them (Allāh bless him and give him peace) toward the keeping of night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], by mentioning its excellent merit and its spiritual reward, so that they would not confine themselves exclusively to the obligatory religious duties [*farāʾiḍ*] and established customary practices [*sunan*].[57]

For the keeping of vigil, one third is the fraction of the night that is most strongly recommended, while the least recommended is one sixth. This is because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never once kept vigil throughout the whole of a night until morning. He would always take some sleep in the course of it. Nor did he ever sleep throughout the whole of a night until morning. He would always keep vigil during some part of it, as we have explained.

It has been said that the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] of the first part of the night is for those who observe *tahajjud*;[58] the vigil [*qiyām*] kept in the middle part of it is for the humbly devout [*qānitīn*]; the vigil kept in the last part of it is for worshippers devoted to the ritual prayer [*muṣallīn*]; and the vigil kept at the break of dawn [*qiyām al-fajr*] is for the heedless.

Yūsuf ibn Mihrān (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "Beneath the Heavenly Throne [*ʿArsh*], as I have been informed, there is an angel in the shape of a rooster [*dīk*]. Its talons are of pearl and its spurs of green topaz. When the first third of

the night has elapsed, its flaps its wings, crows and says: 'Let those who pray *[muṣallūn]* arise!' When half of the night has gone by, it again flaps its wings, crows and says: 'Let those who observe *tahajjud* arise!' Then, when two thirds of the night have passed, it once more flaps its wings, crows and says: 'Let the humbly devout *[qānitūn]* arise!' Finally, when the dawn breaks, it flaps its wings, crows and says: 'Let the heedless now arise, bearing the weight of their sins!'"

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[57] The term *sunna* (of which *sunan* is the plural form) may be applied to a particular practice recommended by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as well as to his exemplary conduct in general. Although there are no capital letters in the Arabic script, it is convenient to mark the distinction, in transliteration, between the specific *sunna/sunan* and the general *Sunna*.

[58] See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

It was one of the truly wise *['ārifīn]* who said: "During the watches of the night *[ashār]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) looks into the hearts of those who are vigilantly wakeful, and He fills their hearts with radiant lights. The benefits accrue to their hearts, so they become enlightened. Then the beneficial effects spread from their hearts to the hearts of the negligent and heedless."

It has been related that Allāh (Exalted is He) conveyed *[awḥā]* these words to one of the champions of the truth *[ṣiddīqīn]*, by way of inspiration: "Among My servants, I have some servants who love Me, and whom I love. They yearn for Me, and I yearn for them. They remember Me, and I remember them. They look toward Me, and I look toward them. So, if you follow their example, I shall love you too, but if you turn away from them, I shall despise you."

"O my Lord," he said, "what is their distinctive feature?" His Lord replied: "They tend the shadows by day, just as the caring shepherd tends his flocks. They yearn for the setting of the sun, just as the birds yearn for their nests around the time of sunset. Then, when the night lowers its veil upon them, and the darkness becomes pervasive, and the mattresses are spread, and the couches are prepared, and every friend forsakes his friend, they direct their footsteps toward Me, and stretch their faces toward Me. They whisper to Me in My way of speaking, and they coax Me with My kind of grace.

"Between one who is crying and one who is weeping, between one who is moaning and one who is complaining, between one who is standing and one who is sitting, between one who is bowing *[rāki']* and one who is making prostration *[sājid]*, within My sight is whatever they are suffering for My sake, and within My hearing is whatever they are complaining about because of My love.

"First of all, I shall give them beams of My light, projected into their hearts, so they will get to know about Me, as I know all about them. As for My second gift, even if the seven heavens and all that they contain were [weighted against them] in their balances, I would reduce the weight thereof to the point of insignificance. As for My third gift, I shall turn My noble countenance toward them. Then, as you will see, when I turn My noble countenance toward someone, that person will recognize one of the gifts I intend to give him."

Concerning the observance of vigil *[qiyām]* throughout the whole of the night.

As for the keeping of vigil *[qiyām]* throughout the whole of the night, that is the practice of the strong, of those who have already been assured of providential care *['ināya]* from Him, those for whom custodial protection *[ri'āya]* has been permanently established, those whose hearts have been enveloped by enabling guidance *[taufīq]*, by the light of Divine Majesty *[Jalāl]* and, then again, of Divine Beauty *[Jamāl]*.

According to traditional reports, 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to enliven the night by performing a single cycle *[rak'a]* of ritual prayer, in which he would recite the whole of the Qur'ān, from beginning to end. (We have mentioned this in a previous subsection.[59])

Tradition also tells of forty men, from among the Successors *[Tābi'ūn]*, who used to keep vigil throughout the entire night, performing the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-ghadāh]* with the ritual ablution of the last evening prayer *[wudū' al-'ishā' al-ākhira]*. They made this their practice for forty years. The traditional reports concerning them are of verified authenticity, and have been widely disseminated. Here are the names of some of them:

Sa'īd ibn Jubair, Ṣafwān ibn Salīm, Abū Ḥāzim and Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir (of the people of Medina); Fudail ibn 'Iyād and Wahb ibn al-Ward (of the people of Mecca); Ṭāwūs and Wahb ibn Munabbih (of the people of Yemen); ar-Rabī' ibn Khaitham and al-Ḥakam (of the people of Kūfa); Abū Sulaimān ad-Dārānī and 'Alī ibn Bakkār (of the people of Damascus); Abū 'Abdu'llāh al-Khawwās and Abū 'Āsim (of the people of 'Abadān); Ḥabīb Abū Aḥmad and Abū Jā'iz al-Salmānī (of the people of Persia); Mālik ibn Dīnār, Sulaimān

On how a person should extricate himself from a state of utter negligence, in which mistakes and sins prevent him from keeping night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]*.

Let us now consider the predicament of someone whose heedless neglect has reached the utmost extreme, whose serious mistakes have hemmed him in from all sides, and whose errors and sins have bound him in chains, thereby preventing him from keeping night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]*. We are speaking of someone who, despite this condition, would dearly love to keep his vigil, and to enter the company of the humbly obedient *[qānitīn]*, of those who seek forgiveness in the watches of the night *[asḥār]*.[60] In order to extricate himself from his terrible predicament, this is what he must do:

He must beg forgiveness of Allāh (Exalted is He), three times, whenever he is ready for sleep, and whenever he lies down to rest. Then he must recite:

In the Name of Allāh,	*Bismi'llāhi 'r-*
the All-Merciful,	*Raḥmāni 'r-*
the All-Compassionate.	*Raḥīm*

Then he must recite ten verses *[āyāt]* from the beginning of the Sūra of the Cave *[Sūrat al-Kahf]*, and ten from the last part of the same. He must also recite [the last part of the Sūra of the Cow *(Sūrat al-Baqara)*, beginning with the words]:

The Messenger believes in that	*āmana 'r-Rasūlu bi-mā*
which has been sent down to him	*unzila ilai-hi*
from his Lord,	*min Rabbi-hi*
and so do the believers. (2:285)	*wa 'l-mu'minūn.*

—and [the Sūra that begins with]:

Say: "O unbelievers.... (109:1)	*qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn . . .*

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[60] This is a clear allusion to several verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān, notably 3:17.

—for then Allāh (Exalted is He) will awaken him and prepare him for the night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], through His all-encompassing grace, His all-embracing forgiveness, and His all-inclusive care for the true believers [*mu'minīn*] among His servants.

He must also say:

O Allāh, awaken me in the hours	*Allāhumma aiqiẓ-nī*
that are dearest to You,	*fī aḥabbi 's-sā'āti ilai-ka*
and employ me in the deeds	*wa 'sta'mil-nī*
that are dearest to You,	*bi-aḥabbi 'l-a'māli ladai-k:*
that will draw me	*allatī tuqarribu-nī*
most closely to You,	*ilai-ka zulfā*
and keep me far removed	*wa yub'idu-nī*
from Your displeasure.	*min sukhṭi-ka bu'dā.*
I am begging You,	*as'alu-ka*
so You will grant what I ask.	*fa-tu'ṭiya-nī*
I am seeking Your forgiveness,	*astaghfiru-ka*
so You will forgive me.	*fa-taghfira lī*
I am beseeching You,	*ad'ū-ka*
so You will answer my plea.	*fa-tastajība lī.*

O Allāh, let me not feel safe	*Allāhumma lā*
from Your cunning,	*tu'min-nī makra-ka*
and do not entrust me	*wa lā tuwalli-nī*
to anyone but You.	*ghaira-ka*
Do not deprive me	*wa lā tarfa'*
of Your protection,	*'an-nī sitra-ka*
let me not forget	*wa lā tunsi-nī*
Your remembrance,	*dhikra-ka*
and do not include me	*wa lā taj'al-nī*
among the heedless.	*mina 'l-ghāfilīn.*

—for it is said that, if someone pronounces these words, when he is about to go to sleep, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will send down to him three angels, who will arouse him for the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. Then, if he performs the prayer and offers a supplication [*ṣallā wa da'ā*], they will say "*Āmīn*" to his supplication [*du'ā'*]. Even if he does not get up to pray, the angels will worship in the air, and the spiritual reward of their act of worship [*'ibāda*] will be recorded in his favor.

He should also repeat the words mentioned in the following quotation, since the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If someone positively enjoys waking up in the course of the night, let him say, at the moment when he lies down to rest:

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma 'b'ath-nī*
arouse me from my couch,	*min madja'i-nī*
to remember You,	*li-dhikri-ka wa shukri-ka*
to thank You,	*wa ṣalāti-ka*
to perform Your prayer,	*wa 'stighfāri-ka*
to seek Your forgiveness,	*wa tilāwati Kitābi-ka*
to recite Your Book,	*wa ḥusni*
and to serve You well.	*'ibādati-k.*

Then let him proclaim the Glory of Allāh *[li-yusabbiḥ]* [61] thirty-three times. Let him give praise to Allāh *[li-yuḥammid]*,[62] thirty-three times. Let him also proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh *[li-yukabbir]*,[63] thirty-three times.

If he prefers, he may say, twenty-five times:

Glory be to Allāh,	*subḥāna 'llāhi*
and praise be to Allāh,	*wa 'l-ḥamdu li'llāhi*
and there is no god but Allāh,	*wa lā ilāha illa 'llāhu*
and Allāh is Supremely Great!	*wa 'llāhu Akbar.*

—since that will be simpler for him, and it will add up to a total of one hundred component parts, counting from the beginning.

'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: "Whenever Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was on the point of going to sleep, resting his cheek on his right hand, and recognizing that he might die in the course of that very night, these are the last words he would say:

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
Lord of the seven heavens	*Rabba 's-samāwāti 's-sab'i*
and Lord of the Mighty Throne,	*wa Rabba 'l-'Arshi 'l-'Aẓīm:*
Our Lord	*Rabba-nā*
and the Lord of every thing,	*wa Rabba kulli shai':*
Revealer of the Torah, the Gospel	*Munazzila 't-Taurāti*
and the Criterion,	*wa 'l-Injīli wa 'l-Furqān:*
Splitter of the grain	*Fāliqa 'l-ḥabbi*
and the date-stone,[64]	*wa 'n-nawā*
I take refuge with You from the evil	*a'ūdhu bi-ka min sharri*
of everything capable of evil,	*kulli dhī sharr:*
and from the evil	*wa min sharri*
of every crawling creature	*kulli dābbatin*
that You are grasping	*Anta ākhidhun*
by its forelock.[65]	*bi-nāṣiyati-hā.*

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[61] See n. 11 on p. 9 above.

[62] See n. 42 on p. 33 above.

[63] The Arabic verb *kabbara*, of which *takbīr* is the corresponding verbal noun, means "to proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh, by saying: 'Allāh is Supremely Great *[Allāhu Akbar]*.'"

[64] This is an allusion to Q. 6:96.

[65] This is an allusion to Q. 11:56.

O Allāh, You are the First,	*Allāhumma Anta 'l-Awwalu*
for there is nothing before You,	*fa-laisa qabla-ka shai'*
and You are the Last,	*wa Anta 'l-Ākhiru*
for there is nothing after You,	*fa-laisa ba'da-ka shai'*
and You are the Outer,	*wa Anta 'ẓ-Ẓāhiru*
for there is nothing above You,	*fa-laisa fawqa-ka shai'*
and You are the Inner,	*wa Anta 'l-Bāṭinu*
for there is nothing below You.	*fa-laisa dūna-ka shai'*
Settle the debt for me,	*iqḍi 'an-ni 'd-daina*
and relieve me of poverty.	*wa aghni 'an-ni 'l-faqr*

◆

Concerning the need to make a constant practice of *tahajjud*,[66] after one has received a blessing through the observance of night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]* and the performance of certain supererogatory devotions *[nawāfil]*.

When someone has received a blessing through the observance of night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]*, and the performance of certain supererogatory devotions *[nawāfil]*, it is incumbent upon him to make a constant practice of *tahajjud*, provided that he is capable of doing so, and that he has no valid excuse for not doing so.

This assertion is based on the fact that, according to a report from ʿĀ'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone embarks on an act of worshipful service *['ibāda]* for the sake of Allāh (Glory be to Him), but then abandons it on account of boredom, Allāh (Exalted is He) will despise him.

Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) also said: "If sleep overwhelmed him, or if he was sick, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would not keep vigil that night. He would perform twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer during the daytime [instead]."

As stated in the traditional report *[khabar]*: "Of all good works, that which is dearest to Allāh (Exalted is He) is that which is most diligently and persistently performed, even if it does not amount to very much."

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[66] See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

Concerning the recommended utterances to be made by someone who devotes part of the night to the practice of *tahajjud*.[67]

When someone intends to devote part of the night to keeping vigil, in order to perform the prayers called *tahajjud*, it is considered commendable for him to say:

Praise be to Allāh,	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi 'lladhī*
who restored me to life	*aḥyā-nī*
after causing me to die;	*baʿda an amāta-nī*
and unto Him is the Resurrection.	*wa ilai-hi 'n-nushūr.*

He should also recite the ten Qurʾānic verses *[āyāt]* from the last part of the Sūra entitled *Āl ʿImrān* [The Family of ʿImrān]:

[There are signs for] those	*alladhīna*
who remember Allāh,	*yadhkurūna 'llāha qiyāman*
standing and sitting	*wa quʿūdan*
and on their sides, and who	*wa ʿalā junūbi-him*
reflect upon the creation	*wa yatafakkarūna*
of the heavens and the earth:	*fī khalqi 's-samāwāti wa 'l-arḍ:*
"Our Lord, You have not created	*Rabba-nā mā khalaqta*
this in vain. Glory be to You!	*hādhā bāṭilā: subḥāna-ka*
So guard us against	*fa-qi-nā*
the torment of the Fire."	*ʿadhāba 'n-nār.*

Our Lord, whomever	*Rabba-nā inna-ka*
You cause to enter the Fire,	*man tudkhili 'n-nāra*
him You will have abased,	*fa-qad akhzaita-h:*
and for the evildoers	*wa mā li'ẓ-ẓālimīna*
there will be no helpers.	*min anṣār.*

Our Lord,	*Rabba-nā*
we have heard a crier calling us	*inna-nā samiʿnā munādiyan*
to faith, saying:	*yunādī li'l-īmāni an*
"Believe in your Lord!"	*āminū bi-Rabbi-kum*
So we have believed.	*fa-āmannā Rabba-nā*
Our Lord, forgive us	*fa-'ghfir la-nā*
our sins and acquit us	*dhunūba-nā wa kaffir*

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who restored me to life	*ahyā-nī*
after causing me to die;	*ba'da an amāta-nī*
and unto Him is the Resurrection.	*wa ilai-hi 'n-nushūr.*

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who remember Allāh,	*yadhkurūna 'llāha qiyāman*
standing and sitting	*wa qu'ūdan*
and on their sides, and who	*wa 'alā junūbi-him*
reflect upon the creation	*wa yatafakkarūna*
of the heavens and the earth:	*fī khalqi 's-samāwāti wa 'l-ard:*
"Our Lord, You have not created	*Rabba-nā mā khalaqta*
this in vain. Glory be to You!	*hādhā bātilā subhāna-ka*
So guard us against	*fa-qi-nā*
the torment of the Fire."	*'adhāba 'n-nār.*

Our Lord, whomever	*Rabba-nā inna-ka*
You cause to enter the Fire,	*man tudkhili 'n-nāra*
him You will have abased,	*fa-qad akhzaita-h:*
and for the evildoers	*wa mā li'z-zālimīna*
there will be no helpers.	*min ansār.*

Our Lord,	*Rabba-nā*
we have heard a crier calling us	*inna-nā sami'nā munādiyan*
to faith, saying:	*yunādī li'l-īmāni an*
"Believe in your Lord!"	*āminū bi-Rabbi-kum*
So we have believed.	*fa-āmannā Rabba-nā*
Our Lord, forgive us	*fa-'ghfir la-nā*
our sins and acquit us	*dhunūba-nā wa kaffir*

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[67] See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

of our evil deeds, and	*'an-nā sayyi'āti-nā*
let us die in the company	*wa tawaffa-nā*
of the righteous.	*ma'a 'l-abrār*
Our Lord, give us that	*Rabba-nā wa āti-nā*
which You have promised us	*mā wa'adta-nā*
through Your Messengers,	*'alā Rusuli-ka*
and do not put us to shame	*wa lā tukhzi-nā*
on the Day of Resurrection.	*yawma 'l-qiyāma.*
Surely You will not fail	*inna-ka lā*
to keep the tryst!	*tukhlifu 'l-mī'ād*
And their Lord has answered them:	*fa-'stajāba la-hum Rabbu-hum*
"I do not waste	*annī lā uḍī'u*
the labor of any laborer among you,	*'amala 'āmilin*
whether male or female;	*min-kum min dhakarin aw unthā:*
the one of you is from the other.	*ba'ḍu-kum min ba'ḍ.*
So those who emigrated,	*fa-'lladhīna hājarū*
and were driven	*wa ukhrijū*
from their homes,	*min diyāri-him*
and suffered for My cause,	*wa ūdhū fī sabīlī*
and fought and were slain,	*wa qātalū wa qutilū*
I shall surely acquit	*la-ukaffiranna*
them of their evil deeds,	*'an-hum sayyi'āti-him*
and I shall admit	*wa la-udkhilanna-hum*
them to Gardens	*jannātin*
underneath which rivers flow—	*tajrī min*
a reward from Allāh,	*taḥti-ha 'l-anhār: thawāban*
and with Allāh	*min 'indi 'llāh: wa 'llāhu*
is the fairest reward."	*'inda-hu ḥusnu 'th-thawāb.*
Let it not delude you,	*lā yaghurranna-ka*
that those who disbelieve	*taqallubu 'lladhīna*
enjoy freedom of action in the land.	*kafarū fi 'l-bilād*
A little enjoyment,	*matā'un qalīl*
but then their habitation	*thumma ma'wā-hum*
will be Hell, an evil cradle!	*jahannam: wa bi'sa 'l-mihād*
But those who keep	*lākini 'lladhīna 'ttaqaw*
their duty to their Lord,	*Rabba-hum la-hum*
for them there will be Gardens	*jannātun*
underneath which rivers flow,	*tajrī min taḥti-ha 'l-anhāru*
dwelling therein forever,	*khālidīna fī-hā nuzulan*
a welcome from their Lord.	*min 'indi 'llāh*
That which Allāh has in store	*wa mā 'inda 'llāhi*
is better for the righteous.	*khairun li'l-abrār*
And of the People of the Book	*wa inna min Ahli 'l-Kitābi*
there are some who believe	*la-man yu'minu*

in Allāh and what has been sent	*bi'llāhi wa mā unzila*
down to you,	*ilai-kum*
and what has been sent down	*wa mā unzila*
to them, humble toward Allāh,	*ilai-him khāshi'īna li'llāhi*
not selling Allāh's signs	*lā yashtarūna bi-āyāti 'llāhi*
for a small price.	*thamanan qalīlā: ulā'ika*
Their reward is with their Lord.	*la-hum ajru-hum 'inda Rabbi-him*
Allāh is Swift at reckoning.	*inna 'llāha Sarī'u 'l-hisāb*
O you who believe, be patient,	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanu 'sbirū*
and vie in patience, be steadfast,	*wa sābirū wa rābitū*
and observe your duty to Allāh,	*wa 'ttaqu 'llāha*
in order that you may succeed.	*la'alla-kum tuflihūn*
(3:191–200)	

Next, he should proceed to clean his teeth with a toothbrush *[siwāk]*, and perform the minor ritual ablution *[wuḍū']*. Then he should say:

Glory be to You,	*subḥāna-ka*
and with Your praise!	*wa bi-ḥamdi-ka*
There is no god but You.	*lā ilāha illā Anta*
I seek Your forgiveness	*astaghfiru-ka*
and I beg You to accept	*wa as'alu-ka 't-*
my repentance,	*tauba:*
so forgive me and relent toward me,	*fa-'ghfir lī wa tub 'alaiya*
for You are the Ever-Relenting,	*inna-ka Anta 't-Tawwābu'r-*
the All-Compassionate.	*Raḥīm.*
O Allāh, let me be	*Allāhumma 'j'al-nī*
one of those who repent.	*mina 't-tawwābīn:*
Let me be one of those	*wa 'j'al-nī*
who purify themselves.	*mina 'l-mutaṭahhirīn:*
Let me be very patient	*wa 'j'al-nī ṣabūran*
and very thankful,	*shakūrā:*
Let me be one of those	*wa 'j'al-nī mim-man*
who remember You	*yadhkuru-ka dhikran*
very, very often,	*kathīrā:*
and who glorify You	*wa yusabbiḥu-ka*
both early and late.	*bukratan wa aṣīlā.*

Then he should raise his head heavenward and say:

I bear witness	*ashhadu an*
that there is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu Waḥda-h*
Alone, without partner.	*lā sharīka la-h:*
I also bear witness that	*wa ashhadu*
Muhammad is His servant	*anna Muḥammadan 'abdu-hu*
and His Messenger.	*wa Rasūlu-h.*
I take refuge with Your pardon	*a'ūdhu bi-'afwi-ka*
from Your torment.	*min 'adhābi-ka*

I take refuge with Your good pleasure	*wa aʿūdhu bi-riḍā-ka*
from Your disapproval,	*min sakhaṭi-ka*
and I take refuge with You	*wa aʿūdhu bi-ka*
from You!	*min-ka*

I can never extol You enough, for	*lā uḥṣī thanāʾan ʿalai-ka*
You are as You have extolled Yourself	*Anta ka-mā athnaita ʿalā Nafsi-k*
I am Your servant,	*ana ʿabdu-ka*
and the son of Your servant.	*wa ʼbnu ʿabdi-ka*
My forelock is in Your hand.[64]	*nāṣiyatī bi-yadi-k*
Let Your judgment be in my favor!	*jārin fiyya ḥukmu-k*
Let Your verdict be fair to me!	*ʿadlun fiyya qaḍāʾu-k*
These are my hands,	*hādhihi yadāya*
with what they have earned,	*bi-mā kasabat*
and this is my soul,	*wa hādhihi nafsī*
with what it has produced.	*bi-mā akhrajat.*

There is no god but You.	*lā ilāha illā Anta*
Glory be to You.	*subḥāna-k:*
I have been one of the wrongdoers.	*innī kuntu mina ʼẓ-ẓālimīn:*
I have acted badly	*ʿamiltu sūʾan*
and wronged myself,	*wa ẓalamtu nafsī*
so forgive me my enormous sin.	*fa-ʼghfir lī dhanbiya ʼl-ʿaẓīm:*
You are indeed my Lord.	*inna-ka Anta Rabbī*
Surely no one	*inna-hu lā*
forgives sins but You.	*yaghfiru ʼdh-dhunūba illā Ant.*

Then, when he stands ready to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], facing toward the *Qibla*, he should say:

Allāh is Supremely Great,	*Allāhu Akbar*
immensely so!	*kabīrā:*
And praise be to Allāh,	*wa ʼl-ḥamdu li'llāhi*
abundantly!	*kathīrā:*
And glory be to Allāh,	*wa subḥāna ʼllāhi*
both early and late.	*bukratan wa aṣīlā:*

He should also say:

Glory be to Allāh!	*subḥāna ʼllāh.*

—ten times;

Praise be to Allāh!	*al-ḥamdu li'llāh*

—ten times;

There is no god but Allāh!	*lā ilāha illa ʼllāh*

—ten times, and:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar*

—ten times.

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[64] See n. 65 on p. 58 above.

He should also say:

Allāh is Supremely Great! [He is]	*Allāhu Akbaru*
the Owner of the Kingdom	*Dhu 'l-Malakūti*
and the Dominion,	*wa 'l-Jabarūti*
of the Grandeur and the Might,	*wa 'l-Kibriyā'i wa 'l-'Aẓamati*
of the Majesty and the Power.	*wa 'l-Jalāli wa Qudra.*

If he wishes to utter the following words, he may do so in the knowledge that they have been transmitted [*ma'thūra*] from Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who used to utter them in his observance of the *tahajjud*[60] prayers:

O Allāh, to You belongs the praise!	*Allāhumma la-ka 'l-ḥamd.*
You are the Light of the heavens	*Anta Nūru 's-samāwāti*
and the earth,	*wa 'l-arḍ*
and to You belongs the praise!	*wa la-ka 'l-ḥamd:*
You are the Splendor of the heavens	*Anta Bahā'u 's-samāwāti*
and the earth,	*wa 'l-arḍ*
and to You belongs the praise!	*wa la-ka 'l-ḥamd:*
You are the Beauty of the heavens	*Anta Zainu 's-samāwāti*
and the earth,	*wa 'l-arḍ*
and to You belongs the praise!	*wa la-ka 'l-ḥamd:*
You are the Eternal Sustainer	*Anta Qayyūmu 's-samāwāti*
of the heavens and the earth,	*wa 'l-arḍi*
and of those therein	*wa man fī-hinna*
and those thereon.	*wa man 'alai-hinn.*
You are the Truth,	*Anta 'l-Ḥaqqu*
and from You comes	*wa min-ka 'l-*
what is real and true.	*ḥaqq:*
The Garden is real and true	*wa 'l-jannatu ḥaqqun*
and the Fire is real and true.	*wa 'n-nāru ḥaqqun*
The Prophets are real and true,	*wa 'n-Nabiyyūna ḥaqqun*
and Muhammad (Allāh bless him	*wa Muḥammadun*
and give him peace) is real and true.	*(ṣalla 'llāhu 'alai-hi wa sallam) ḥaqq.*
O Allāh, to You I have surrendered,	*Allāhumma la-ka aslamtu*
in You I have believed,	*wa bi-ka āmantu*
and in You I have placed my trust.	*wa 'alai-ka tawakkaltu*
With Your aid I have argued	*wa bi-ka*
my case	*khāṣamtu*
[against my unbelieving foes],	
and to You I have	*wa ilai-ka*
submitted the judgment.	*ḥākamtu:*
So grant me forgiveness	*fa-'ghfir*
for whatever [sins]	*lī mā qaddamtu*
I have committed,	*wa mā akhkhartu*

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[60] See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

in earlier and later times,	*wa mā asrartu*
in secret and in public.	*wa mā a'lant.*
You are the Accelerator,	*Anta 'l-Muqaddimu*
and You are the Postponer.	*wa Anta 'l-Mu'akhkhir:*
There is no god but You.	*lā ilāha illā* Anta.
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
grant my soul its true devotion,	*āti nafsī taqwā-hā*
and cause it to grow in purity.	*wa zakki-hā*
You are the One best qualified	*Anta Khairu*
to purify it.	*man zakkā-hā*
You are its Custodian	*Anta Waliyyu-hā*
and its Master.	*wa Maulā-hā*
O Allāh, guide me	*Allāhumma 'hdi-nī*
toward the best of deeds,	*li-aḥsani 'l-a'māli*
for none guides to the best	*fa-inna-hu lā yahdī*
of them but You,	*li-aḥsani-hā illā* Anta
and avert from me	*wa 'ṣrif*
the worst of them,	*'an-nī sayyi'a-hā*
for none averts the worst	*fa-inna-hu lā yaṣrifu*
of them but You.	*sayyi'a-hā illā* Ant.
My request to You	*as'alu-ka mas'alata 'l-*
is that of a wretched beggar,	*bā'isi 'l-miskīni*
and my plea to You	*wa ad'ū-ka du'ā'a 'l-*
is that of a miserable pauper,	*muftaqiri 'dh-dhalīl:*
so do not treat me as a rogue,	*fa-lā taj'al-nī*
my Lord, for supplicating You.	*bi-du'ā'i-ka Rabbi shaqiyyan*
Be Kind to me, and Compassionate,	*wa kun bī Ra'ūfan Raḥīman*
O Best of those who are asked,	*yā Khaira 'l-mas'ūlīna*
and Most Generous of those who give'	*wa Akrama 'l-mu'ṭīn.*

As we learn from a traditional report, conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā',[70] it was Abū Salama ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān who said:

"I once asked 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her): 'What expressions did the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) usually utter, when proclaiming the Supreme Greatness of Allāh and commencing his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, while he was keeping vigil through part of the night?' She answered by telling me: 'He used to proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh and commence [his ritual prayer] by saying:

"O Allāh, Lord of Gabriel	*Allāhumma Rabba Jibrīla*
and Michael and Isrāfīl,	*wa Mīkā'īla wa Isrāfīl*
Creator of the heavens	*Fāṭira 's-samāwāti*
and the earth,	*wa 'l-arḍ:*

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[70] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr—Abū Salama ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān—'Ā'isha** (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

Knower of the unseen	*ʿĀlima 'l-ghaibi*
and the visible,	*wa 'sh-shahāda:*
You will judge	*Anta taḥkumu*
between Your servants	*baina ʿibādi-ka*
concerning that over which	*fī-mā*
they used to be at odds.[71]	*kānū yakhtalifūn:*
Guide me to that	*ihdi-nī*
over which they were at odds—	*li-ma 'khtulifa fī-hi*
to the Truth, by Your leave.	*mina 'l-ḥaqqi bi-idhni-k:*
You surely guide whomever You will	*inna-ka tahdī man tashāʾu*
to a path that is straight.	*ilā ṣirāṭin mustaqīm.*

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[71] This is an obvious allusion to Q. 22:69.

Concerning the recommended approach to the observance of nighttime prayer *[ṣalāt al-lail]*.

When the worshipper gets up to perform the nighttime prayer *[ṣalāt al-lail]*, he should follow these recommendations:

He should open his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* with two simple, unprotracted cycles *[rakʿatain khafīfatain]*.

He should not take anything in the way of food and drink, until he has concluded whatever Allāh graciously bestows upon him in the way of performing the ritual prayer *[fiʿl aṣ-ṣalāt]* and the proclamation of His glory *[tasbīḥ]*. This is because, when he wakes up from his sleep, he is undisturbed in his feelings and free from distracting concerns. As soon as he eats or drinks, however, the clear state of his heart will alter and turn murky. His best course, therefore, is to postpone the consumption of food and drink until later, unless he is very hungry indeed, to the point where hunger would make him inattentive, or if he is afraid of excessive daytime hunger in the month of Ramaḍān, and therefore dreads the break of dawn. In cases like these, the recommended course is to take one's meal at an earlier stage.

◆

Concerning the recommended number of Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]* to be recited before the nighttime worshipper goes to sleep.

In order to be admitted into the company of the worshipful servants *[zumrat al-'ābidīn]*, and not to be registered as one of those who are negligent and heedless *[ghāfilīn]*, the keeper of vigil must conform to the recommended practice, which means that he must not go off to sleep until he has recited three hundred Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]*. He is therefore well advised to recite the Sūra of the Criterion *[Sūrat al-Furqān]*[72] and the Sūra of the Poets *[Sūrat ash-Shu'arā']*,[73] since the two of them together contain a total of three hundred verses *[āyāt]*.

If he does not know these two Sūras well enough, he may recite from the the Sūra of the Morning Star *[Sūrat at-Ṭāriq]*[74] right through to the very end of the Qur'ān, since that whole section also includes three hundred verses *[āyāt]*.

It will be even better for him, and more complete in respect of merit, if he recites one thousand verses *[alf āya]*, that is to say, from the Sūra[75] that begins with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Blessed is He in whose Hand is the Sovereignty.	*tabāraka 'lladhī bi-yadi-hi 'l-mulk.*

—through to the very end of the Qur'ān.

If he does not know the Qur'ān well enough [to be able to adopt any of these suggestions], he may recite [the short Sūra that begins with His words (Exalted is He)]:[76]

Say: "He is Allāh, One!"	*Qul Huwa 'llāh Aḥad.*

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[72] The Sūra of the Criterion *[Sūrat al-Furqān]* is the 25th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[73] The Sūra of the Poets *[Sūrat ash-Shu'arā']* is the 26th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[74] The Sūra of the Morning Star *[Sūrat at-Ṭāriq]* is the 86th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[75] Often referred to as the Sūra of Sovereignty *[Sūrat al-Mulk]*, this is the 67th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[76] See note 28 on p. 27 above.

—two hundred and fifty times, for that will add up to a grand total of one thousand verses *[alf āya]*.

It is important for him not to omit the recitation, throughout the entire course of the night, of four particular Sūras, namely: (1) the Sūra that begins with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Alif, Lām, Mīm.	*Alif–Lām–Mīm.*
The revelation of the Book,	*tanzīlu 'l-Kitābi*
of which there is no doubt,	*lā raiba fī-hi*
is from the Lord of All the Worlds.	*min Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn*

—that is to say, the Sūra of Prostration *[Sūrat as-Sajda]*.[77] (2) the Sūra entitled *Yā-Sīn*.[78] (3) the Sūra that begins with the words of Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He):

Ḥā-Mīm.	*Ḥā-Mīm:*
By the Book that makes plain;	*wa 'l-Kitābi 'l-mubīni*
We sent it down	*innā anzalnā-hu*
on a blessed night.... (44:1-3)	*fī lailatin mubārakatin.*

—that is to say, the Sūra of Smoke *[Sūrat ad-Dukhān]*,[79] and (4) the Sūra that begins with His words (Exalted is He):

Blessed is He in whose Hand	*tabāraka 'lladhī*
is the Sovereignty.	*bi-yadi-hi 'l-mulk.*

—that is to say, the Sūra of Sovereignty *[Sūrat al-Mulk]*.[80]

He will do better still if he also recites, together with these four, the Sūra of the Enshrouded One *[Sūrat al-Muzzammil]*[81] and the Sūra of the Event *[Sūrat al-Wāqi'a]*.[82]

It is said that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would never go off to sleep until he had recited the Sūra of Prostration *[Sūrat as-Sajda]*[83] and the Sūra that begins with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Blessed is He in whose Hand	*tabāraka 'lladhī*
is the Sovereignty.	*bi-yadi-hi 'l-mulk.*

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[77] The Sūra of Prostration *[Sūrat as-Sajda]* is the 32nd Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[78] The Sūra entitled Yā–Sīn is the 36th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[79] The Sūra of Smoke *[Sūrat ad-Dukhān]* is the 44th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[80] See n. 75 on p. 69 above.

[81] The Sūra of the Enshrouded One *[Sūrat al-Muzzammil]* is the 73rd Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[82] The Sūra of the Event *[Sūrat al-Wāqi'a]* is the 56th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[83] See n. 77 above.

Concerning the recommended number of Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]* to be recited before the nighttime worshipper goes to sleep.

In order to be admitted into the company of the worshipful servants *[zumrat al-'ābidīn]*, and not to be registered as one of those who are negligent and heedless *[ghāfilīn]*, the keeper of vigil must conform to the recommended practice, which means that he must not go off to sleep until he has recited three hundred Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]*. He is therefore well advised to recite the Sūra of the Criterion *[Sūrat al-Furqān]*[72] and the Sūra of the Poets *[Sūrat ash-Shu'arā']*,[73] since the two of them together contain a total of three hundred verses *[āyāt]*.

If he does not know these two Sūras well enough, he may recite from the the Sūra of the Morning Star *[Sūrat at-Ṭāriq]*[74] right through to the very end of the Qur'ān, since that whole section also includes three hundred verses *[āyāt]*.

It will be even better for him, and more complete in respect of merit, if he recites one thousand verses *[alf āya]*, that is to say, from the Sūra[75] that begins with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Blessed is He in whose Hand is the Sovereignty.	*tabāraka 'lladhī* *bi-yadi-hi 'l-mulk.*

—through to the very end of the Qur'ān.

If he does not know the Qur'ān well enough [to be able to adopt any of these suggestions], he may recite [the short Sūra that begins with His words (Exalted is He)]:[76]

Say: "He is Allāh, One!"	*Qul Huwa 'llāh Ahad.*

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[72] The Sūra of the Criterion *[Sūrat al-Furqān]* is the 25th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[73] The Sūra of the Poets *[Sūrat ash-Shu'arā']* is the 26th Sūra of the Qur'ān

[74] The Sūra of the Morning Star *[Sūrat at-Ṭāriq]* is the 86th Sūra of the Qur'ān

[75] Often referred to as the Sūra of Sovereignty *[Sūrat al-Mulk]*, this is the 67th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[76] See note 28 on p. 27 above.

and He is the Omnipotent,	*wa Huwa 'l-'Azīzu 'l-*
the All-Wise. (57:1)	*Ḥakīm.*

• The Sūra of Exile *[Sūrat al-Ḥashr]*, which begins with the words of Allāh (Glorious and Exalted is He):

All that is in the heavens	*sabbaḥa li'llāhi*
has glorified Allāh,	*mā fi 's-samāwāti*
and all that is in the earth,	*wa mā fi 'l-arḍ:*
and He is the Omnipotent,	*wa Huwa 'l-'Azīzu 'l-*
the All-Wise. (59:1)	*Ḥakīm.*

• The Sūra of the Ranks *[Sūrat as-Ṣaff]*, which begins with the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

All that is in the heavens	*sabbaḥa li'llāhi*
has glorified Allāh,	*mā fi 's-samāwāti*
and all that is in the earth,	*wa mā fi 'l-arḍ:*
and He is the Omnipotent,	*wa Huwa 'l-'Azīzu 'l-*
the All-Wise. (61:1)	*Ḥakīm*

• The Sūra of the Congregation *[Sūrat al-Jumu'a]*, which begins with His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

All that is in the heavens	*yusabbiḥu li'llāhi*
glorifies Allāh,	*mā fi 's-samāwāti*
and all that is in the earth,	*wa mā fi 'l-arḍi 'l-*
[for He is] the King,	*Maliki 'l-*
the All-Holy, the Omnipotent,	*Quddūsi 'l-'Azīzi 'l-*
the All-Wise. (62:1)	*Ḥakīm:*

• The Sūra of Mutual Disillusion *[Sūrat at-Taghābun]*, which begins with the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

All that is in the heavens	*sabbaḥa li'llāhi*
has glorified Allāh,	*mā fi 's-samāwāti*
and all that is in the earth.	*wa mā fi 'l-arḍ:*
To Him belongs the sovereignty	*la-hu 'l-mulku*
and to Him belongs the praise,	*wa la-hu 'l-ḥamd:*
and He is Capable of all things.	*wa Huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr*
(64:1)	

• The Sūra of the Most High *[Sūrat al-A'lā]*, which begins with the words of Allāh (Glory be to Him and Exalted is He):

Glorify the Name	*sabbiḥi 'sma*
of your Lord the Most High,	*Rabbi-ka 'l-A'lā:*
who created, and then shaped,	*alladhī khalaqa fa-sawwā*
and who determined, then guided	*wa 'lladhī qaddara fa-hadā*
(87:1–3)	

As for the verse *[āya]* that is said to be "more excellent than a hundred thousand verses," most of the scholars maintain that its specific identity is concealed from our knowledge, like the exact date of the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*,[88] or the precise time of the Special Hour on Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Sā'at al-Jum'a]*.[89] According to 'Abd al-Ḥaqq, however, it is most probably either the final verse *[āya]* of the Sūra of Exile *[Sūrat al-Ḥashr]*, in which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

He is Allāh, the Creator,	*Huwa 'llāhu 'l-Khāliqu 'l-*
the Maker, the Shaper.	*Bāri'u 'l-Muṣawwiru*
His are the Most Beautiful Names.	*la-hu 'l-asmā'u 'l-ḥusnā.*
All that is in the heavens	*yusabbiḥu la-hu*
glorifies Him	*mā fi 's-samāwāti*
and all that is in the earth,	*wa mā fi 'l-arḍ:*
and He is the Omnipotent,	*wa Huwa 'l-'Azīzu 'l-*
the All-Wise. (59:24)	*Ḥakīm.*

—or the first verse *[āya]* of the Sūra of Iron *[Sūrat al-Ḥadīd]*, in which Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

All that is in the heavens	*sabbaḥa li'llāhi*
and the earth has glorified Allāh,	*mā fi 's-samāwāti wa 'l-arḍ:*
and He is the Omnipotent,	*wa Huwa 'l-'Azīzu 'l-*
the All-Wise. (57:1)	*Ḥakīm.*

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[88] As Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained, in the Sixth Discourse of the present work:

> Concerning the wisdom in the decision of Allāh (Exalted is He) to make known [the date of] the Night of Absolution, while concealing [that of] the Night of Power, it has been said to lie in the fact that the Night of Power is the night of mercy and forgiveness and emancipation from the fires of Hell, which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has kept hidden so that there can be no discussion about it. He has made known the Night of Absolution, however, because it is the night of regulation and decree, the night of displeasure and approval, the night of acceptance and rejection, of attainment and obstruction, the night of bliss and woe, of grace and cleansing.

(See Vol. 3, p. 67.)

[89] See p. 18 above, and especially Vol. 3, pp. 295–325.

Concerning various things from which help should be sought, in preparation for the observance of night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]*.

In order to prepare himself for the observance of night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]*, the worshipper should turn to several things for assistance, including the following:

- Keeping to a lawful diet *[akl al-halāl]*.
- Charting a straight course toward repentance *[tauba]*, by using fear of the threatened penalty *[waʿīd]* as the negative pole of the compass, and hope of the promised reward *[mauʿūd]* as the positive pole thereof.
- Taking care to avoid the consumption of things that are of dubious legality *[shubuhāt]*, and steering clear of persistence in the commission of sins.
- Ridding the heart of the dominant influence of worldly concern and attachment, by remembering death, and by reflecting on the Resurrection *[Maʿād]* and what one will encounter after death.

A man once said to al-Ḥasan [al-Basrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "O Abū Saʿīd, I have rejected my own excuses. I love the idea of keeping night vigil, and I prepare my state of ritual purity [in order to be ready for it], so what can be wrong with me? Why do I not get up to observe the vigil in practice?" To this al-Ḥasan replied: "Your sins have tied you down."

It was ath-Thawrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "I was banned from keeping night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]* for five long months, and all because of a sin I had committed." When someone asked him what that sin had been, he explained: "I saw a man shedding tears, so I said to myself: 'This fellow is nothing but an ostentatious hyprocrite *[murāʾin]*!'"

Al-Ḥasan [al-Basrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) used to say: "It may happen that the servant [of the Lord] commits a sin, and then finds himself banned, because of it, from both nighttime vigil *[qiyām al-lail]* and daytime fasting *[ṣiyām an-nahār]*."

As someone has wisely expressed it: "Many a meal has prevented the keeping of night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]*, just as many a glance has banned the recitation of a Qur'ānic Sūra. The servant [of the Lord] may gobble the meal, or commit some act [of impropriety], only to find himself banned, because of it, from observing the customary[90] practice *[qiyām as-sunna]*. Through the art of careful scrutiny *[tafaqqud]*, he will come to recognize the difference between excess and deficiency, and by committing fewer sins he will master the art of careful scrutiny."

Abū Sulaimān (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "No one ever misses a congregational prayer *[ṣalāt jamāʿa]*, except on account of a sin." He also used to say: "The nocturnal emission of sperm *[iḥtilām]* is a punishment, and the [resulting] state of major ritual impurity *[janāba]* is a state of remoteness [from the Lord]."

Other practices that are helpful, in preparation for the observance of night vigil, include reducing one's intake of food and drink to the bare minimum, and keeping the stomach as empty as possible. This advice is supported by the following traditional report, related by ʿAwn ibn ʿAbdi'llāh (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him):

"Among the Children of Israel *[Banī Isrāʾīl]* there were people who devoted themselves to worshipful service, so, when their time of breaking fast *[fiṭr]* was at hand, a superintendent would address them, saying: 'Do not eat too much, for, if you eat a lot, you will also sleep a lot. Then, if you sleep a lot, you will do very little praying.'"

The tendency to sleep a lot, it has been said, can also result from the frequent drinking of water. As a matter of fact, this is said to represent the unanimous view of seventy champions of the truth *[sabʿīn ṣiddīqan]*, all of whom maintain that much sleeping results from much drinking of water.

In his preparation for keeping night vigil, the worshipper will also find it helpful to accustom his heart to anxiety, to grief and to sorrow, as well as to constant alertness, for he will thereby enliven his heart. He should also maintain a constant contemplation of the Heavenly Kingdom *[al-Malakūt]*. He should take a nap or siesta during the daytime, and avoid overtiring his physical limbs and organs in dealing with the affairs of this world.

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[90] By "customary" we mean following the exemplary custom [*sunna* in Arabic] of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

If he so chooses, he may spend the first part of the night awake, until sleep overwhelms him. Then he may sleep, and then renew his vigil when he wakes up. Then he may sleep again, when sleep overwhelms him, and then arise to spend the last part of the night in vigil. In the course of the night, he will thus experience two awakenings [*qawmatān*] and two bouts of sleeping [*nawmatān*]. He will thereby brave the stresses and strains of the night, which is the hardest of deeds to accomplish.

Such is the spiritual state of the people of present awareness [*huḍūr*], conscious alertness [*yaqẓa*], reflection [*fikr*] and contemplation [*tadhakkur*]. Such, it has also been said, are some of the charateristics of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). The ordinary nighttime worshipper is likely to experience very irregular bouts of waking and sleeping. As for the ability to strike a perfectly even balance between vigil and slumber, that is peculiar to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), because his heart is in a permanent state of alertness. The inspiration [*waḥy*] received from Allāh (Glory be to Him), telling precisely what to do and what not to do, and exactly when to wake up and when to sleep, and indicating the need for change and movement—that is peculiar to him, and quite beyond the scope of ordinary creatures.

Concerning two reasons why the keeper of night vigil is recommended to catch some sleep during the last part of the night.

The keeper of night vigil [*man qāma 'l-lail*] is recommended to catch some sleep during the last part of the night, for these two reasons:

1. Drowsiness [*nuʿās*] will thereby leave him unaffected in the early morning [*ghadāh*]. It is considered reprehensible to sleep in the early morning, which explains why they used to instruct a drowsy person [*nāʿis*] to sleep after the [prescribed] prayer of dawn [*ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ*], and to refrain from sleeping before the same. As we learn from traditional sources, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would usually take a nap after the [prescribed] prayer of daybreak [*ṣalāt al-fajr*].
2. Sleep during the last part of the night is effective in ridding the face of a pallid complexion [*ṣufra*]. If a person forces himself to go without the sleep he needs, and does not even take a nap, his complexion will retain its state of pallor. That is something against which he ought to be on guard, because it is a doorway that leads into a blind alley [*bāb ghāmid*]. It is conducive to hidden ambition [*shahwa khafiyya*] and concealed polytheism [*shirk khafī*], because people will point him out as someone special. He will acquire an imaginary reputation as a model of righteousness [*ṣalāḥ*], as one who is devoted to vigilant wakefulness and fasting, and who is motivated by the fear of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)—and all on account of that pallid complexion he wears on his face. We take refuge with Allāh from attributing partners to Him [*shirk*], and from hypocritical display [*riyā'*], as well as from every signpost that points in the direction thereof!

It is also important for the keeper of vigil to drink only a minimal amount of water in the course of the night. This is because the drinking of water tends to bring on sleep, as we have explained above,[91] and because it contributes to the pallid complexion of the face, especially in the last part of the night, but also at the time of waking up from sleep.

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[91] See p. 75 above.

As we are told in the words of the traditional report *[khabar]*: "When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had performed the *witr* prayer at the end of the night, he used to lie down and take a nap, reclining on his right side, until Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him) came to give him the call, at which point he would go out with him to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*."

Our righteous predecessors *[as-salaf]* were very much in favor of this practice of reclining and taking a nap, after the *witr* and before the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ]*. Some of them even went so far as to make it an established customary practice *[sunna]*, notably Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) and those who followed his example in this respect.

When they recommended this practice so highly, they did so for very good reasons. It is of the utmost value to the people of direct vision *[mushāhada]* and present awareness *[ḥuḍūr]*, because they receive insights into the Heavenly Kingdom *[al-Malakūt]*, they are enlightened by all kinds of knowledge from the Heavenly Dominion *[al-Jabarūt]*, they grasp the mysterious subtleties of the law and the sciences *[gharā'ib al-ḥukm wa 'l-'ulūm]*, and they come to recognize what had been concealed from them, in the way of destiny's allotted shares and portions, meaning what has been prepared for them by the Lord of the realm of creation *[Rabb al-khalīqa]*, the Knower of the invisible realms *['Allām al-Ghuyūb]*. It is also of value to the dutiful workers *['ummāl]* and those engaged in the sacred struggle *[ahl al-mujāhada]*, since in their case it represents a much-needed opportunity for rest and relaxation.

This explains why Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) forbade the performance of ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* in the interval between the rising of the dawn *[ṭulū' al-fajr]* and the rising of the sun *[ṭulū' ash-shams]*, and in the interval between the afternoon *['aṣr]* and the setting of the sun *[ghurūb ash-shams]*, thereby allowing periods of rest for those who observe the nocturnal and diurnal litanies *[ahl aurād al-lail wa 'n-nahār]*.

It is likewise recommended, for the keeper of vigil, that he should punctuate the phases of the nighttime prayer *[ṣalāt al-lail]* with a period of sitting still, in which he recites one hundred glorifications *[yusabbiḥ mi'a tasbīḥa]*. This will be helpful to him in the performance of the prayer itself, for it will allow his physical limbs and organs to take a rest. The lower self *[nafs]* may cease to regard the vigil with an attitude of weary boredom, and may even acquire a positive liking for nighttime worship *[tahajjud]* and the ritual prayer *[salāt]*. Be that as it may, this recommendation is clearly in accordance with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And in the night	*wa mina 'l-laili*
proclaim His praise,	*fa-sabbiḥ-hu*
and at the setting of the stars.	*wa idbāra 'n-nujūm*
(52:49)	

—and with His words (Exalted is He):

And in the night	*wa mina 'l-laili*
proclaim His praise,	*fa-sabbiḥ-hu*
and at the ends of the prostrations.	*wa adbāra 's-sujūd.*
(50:40)	

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Concerning how to make up for having missed the night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]* on account of sleep or preoccupation [with worldly matters].

If someone misses the night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]* on account of sleep or preoccupation [with worldly matters], and if he then makes up for it [with devotions performed] between the rising of the sun and the sun's decline from the meridian, he is just like a worshipper who has performed the prayer at its proper time in the night.

This assertion is based on a traditional report, conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā',[92] to the effect that 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> Four cycles of ritual prayer *[raka'āt]*, performed before the point of noon *[qabl az-zuhr]*—which is just after the sun's decline from the meridian *[ba'd az-zawāl]*—will be reckoned as equal to their counterparts in the period before daybreak *[as-sahar]*.

Likewise reported on the authority of 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is a statement of similar import, though differently worded, in which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> If someone fails to recite his section of the Qur'ān *[hizb]* in the course of the night, due to oversleeping or simply forgetting about it, and if he then recites it in the period between the dawn prayer *[salāt al-fajr]* and the noon prayer *[salāt az-zuhr]*, it will be just as if he had recited it during the night.

One of our righteous forebears *[as-salaf]* is reported as having said: "On this point, the members of the family of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) are unanimously agreed. They all maintain that, if someone performs his litany *[wird]*—after missing it during the night—before the sun's decline from the meridian, he is just like someone who actually performed it during the night."

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[92] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—'Abdu'llāh ibn Ghanam—'Umar ibn al-Khattāb** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

If he is unable to do this, he should make up for it between the noon *[ẓuhr]* and the afternoon *['aṣr]*.

Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

And He it is who has made	*wa Huwa 'lladhī ja'ala 'l-*
the night and day a succession,	*laila wa 'n-nahāra khilfatan*
for him who desires to remember,	*li-man arāda an yadhdhakkara*
or desires thankfulness. (25:62)	*aw arāda shukūrā.*

—in other words, He has caused them to be a pair of alternating successors *[khalafam]*, which follow one after the other in priority, replacing each other by turns.

◆

Concerning the five litanies of the nighttime *[awrād al-lail]*, and their respective times.

From all that has been mentioned and discussed above, we may reach the conclusion that the litanies of the nighttime *[awrād al-lail]* are five in number, namely:

1. The litany *[wird]* that is recited between sunset and nightfall *[baina 'l-‘ishā’ain]*.[93]
2. That which is recited after the late evening prayer *[al-‘ishā’ al-ākhira]*, and before the time when the worshipper goes off to sleep.
3. That which is recited in the middle of the night *[jawf al-lail]*.
4. That which is recited in the final third of the night.
5. That which is recited in the last interval *[saḥar]* before the appearance of the second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]*.[94] This is the period of time during which it is forbidden to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*,[95] and this is why the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The [voluntary] nighttime ritual prayer *[ṣalāt al-lail]* is properly performed in sets of two cycles *[mathnā mathnā]*, but if you are afraid [that you may not finish before the appearance] of the dawn *[fajr]*, you must perform one separate cycle of prayer *[awtir bi-rak‘a]*, and what has preceded it will then be counted as part of your *witr* prayer.

O Allāh, [let him not resort to this] unless he happens to have missed his *witr* prayer and his litany *[wird]* through oversleeping, for he ought to perform his ritual prayer at this [the appropriate] hour, in accordance with the explanation given above, in the subsection concerning the performance of the *witr*.[96]

[93] Literally, "between the two evening times."

[94] The second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]* is also known as the true dawn *[al-fajr aṣ-ṣādiq]*

[95] See p. 109 below.

[96] See pp. 42–44 above.

Subsections *[fuṣūl]* concerning the litanies of the daytime *[awrād an-nahār]*.

Concerning the five litanies of the daytime *[awrād an-nahār]*, and their respective times.

As for the litanies of the daytime *[awrād an-nahār]*, these are also five in number, namely:

1. The litany *[wird]* recited in the period between the appearance of the second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]*[97] and the rising of the sun.
2. That which is recited between the forenoon ritual prayer *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]* (or the corresponding time, if that prayer is not performed)[98] and the moment of the sun's decline from the meridian *[zawāl]*.
3. That which is recited in conjunction with four cycles *[raka'āt]* [of voluntary ritual prayer], after the sun's decline from the meridian *[zawāl]*, with a beautiful Qur'ānic recitation and a single salutation *[salām]*. It has been said that the gates of heaven are opened up to receive it.
4. That which is recited between the time of the noon prayer and the time of the afternoon prayer *[baina 'ẓ-ẓuhr wa 'l-'aṣr]*.
5. That which is recited after the time of the afternoon prayer, and before the sunset *[ba'da 'l-'aṣr wa qabla 'l-ghurūb]*.

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[97] The second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]* is also known as the true dawn *[al-fajr aṣ-ṣādiq]*. (See p. 118 below.)

[98] The forenoon prayer *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]* is not one of the five obligatory daily prayers. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once described it as "the prayer of those who frequently repent *[ṣalāt al-awwābīn]*." According to one authority cited by E.W. Lane in his *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. '–W–B, the time for its [optional] performance is "when the young camels feel the heat of the sun from the parched ground." According to Thomas Patrick Hughes (*Dictionary of Islam*, art. ṢALĀT), the forenoon prayer *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]* consists of eight cycles *[raka'āt]*, and the time for its optional performance is around 11 a.m.

Concerning the first litany [*wird*] of the daytime.

As for the first litany [*wird*] of the daytime, the recommended procedure is as follows: The worshipper should remain in a sitting posture, from just after the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] until the rising of the sun. He should devote that period to the remembrance of Allāh (Exalted is He), either by reciting the Qurʾān, or through some other suitable practice, such as glorification [*tasbīḥ*],[99] or reflection [*tafakkur*], or contemplation [*tadhakkur*], or providing religious instruction [*taʿlīm*], or sitting as a student in the company of a religious scholar [*ʿālim*]. The same applies to the period between the end of the afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*] and the setting of the sun, because both are periods of time in which it is forbidden to perform supererogatory ritual prayers [*tanafful bi'ṣ-ṣalāt*].

This is based on a traditional report, conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ,[100] to the effect that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> To sit with a group of people, from just after the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] until the rising of the sun, remembering Allāh (Exalted is He), proclaiming His Supreme Greatness [*yukabbirūna*][101] and affirming His Uniqueness [*yuhallilūna*][102] — that is even dearer to me than securing the emancipation of a pair of slaves. As for remembering Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) from just after the afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*] until the sun sets, that is even dearer to me than securing the emancipation of four slaves, from among the offspring of Ishmael [*Ismāʿīl*].

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[99] See n. 11 on p. 9 above.

[100] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Bannāʾ—Abū ʿAlī Ismāʿīl ibn Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Khaṭṭī —Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb—Hudaba ibn Khālid al-Qaisī—Aḥmad ibn Salama—ʿAlī ibn Zaid—ash-Shaʿbī—Abū Umāma (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[101] See n. 63 on p. 58 above.

[102] See n. 10 on p. 9 above.

According to another traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> You must not sleep at the expense of seeking your provisions *[arzāq]*!

"O Anas," someone asked, "what did Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) mean, when he said: 'You must not sleep at the expense of seeking your provisions *[arzāq]*'?" So Anas explained: "As soon as you have performed the dawn prayer *[ṣallaitum al-fajr]*, [instead of going off to sleep] you should say, thirty-three times:

• Praise be to Allāh!	*al-ḥamdu li'llāh.*
• Glory be to Allāh!	*subḥāna 'llāh.*
• There is no god but Allāh!	*lā ilāha illa 'llāh.*
• Allāh is Supremely Great! "	*Allāhu Akbar.*

According to another traditional report *[ḥadīth]*, the worshipper should say:

• Glory be to Allāh!	*subḥāna 'llāh.*

—thirty-three times,

• Praise be to Allāh!	*al-ḥamdu li'llāh.*

—thirty-three times, and:

• Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*

—thirty-four times.

Then, to set the seal on his devotions, he should conclude by saying:

There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu*
Alone, without partner.	*Waḥda-hu lā sharīka la-h:*
To Him belongs the sovereignty	*la-hu 'l-mulku*
and to Him belongs the praise.	*wa la-hu 'l-ḥamd:*
He brings to life and causes death,	*yuḥyī wa yumītu*
while He is Ever-Living and never dies.	*wa Huwa Ḥayyun lā yamūt.*
All goodness is in His Hand,	*bi-yadihi 'l-khairu*
and He is Capable of all things.	*wa Huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr*

The same procedure should be followed in the wake of the afternoon prayer *[ba'da 'l-'aṣr]*, and again when the time for sleep is at hand.

Shaikh Abū Naṣr has also informed us[104] that az-Zubair (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

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[104] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his own father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from 'Urwa ibn az-Zubair—his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

> An errand in the early morning or the evening *[ghadwa au rawḥa]*, in fighting for Allāh's cause *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*, is better than this world and all that it contains.

A man then said: "O Messenger of Allāh, so what about someone who is unable to take part in a military campaign *[ghazw]*?" To this he replied:

> If a worshipper remains in a sitting posture, from the time when he performs the prayer of sunset *[yuṣalli 'l-maghrib]*, remembering Allāh (Exalted is He) until he performs the prayer of late evening *[yuṣalli 'l-'ishā']*, that session *[majlis]* of his will count as an evening errand in the cause of Allāh *[rawḥa fī sabīli 'llāh]*. As for one who remains in a sitting posture, from the time when he performs the prayer of daybreak *[yuṣalli 'l-ghadāh]*, remembering Allāh (Exalted is He) until the sun rises, that session *[majlis]* of his will be just like an early morning errand in the cause of Allāh *[ghadwa fī sabīli 'llāh]*.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā',[104] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If any servant [of the Lord] recites, in the wake of the [prescribed] ritual prayer of daybreak *[ṣalāt al-ghadāh]*:

There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu*
Alone, without partner.	*Waḥda-hu lā sharīka la-h:*
To Him belongs the sovereignty	*la-hu 'l-mulku*
and to Him belongs the praise.	*wa la-hu 'l-ḥamd:*
He brings to life and causes death,	*yuḥyī wa yumītu*
while He is Ever-Living	*wa Huwa Ḥayyun*
and never dies.	*lā yamūt:*
All goodness is in His Hand,	*bi-yadihi 'l-khairu*
and He is Capable of all things.	*wa Huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*

> —ten times, Allāh will certainly reward him for those ten recitations. He will do so by recording ten good deeds in his credit column, and by erasing ten bad deeds from his debit column. He will also promote him by ten spiritual degrees. Those ten recitations will be equivalent to [the emancipation of] ten slaves, and he will not be harmed by any sin he may commit that day, unless it be some form of *shirk* [associating partners with Allāh].
>
> If any servant [of the Lord] performs the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* really well, so that he washes his face as Allāh (Exalted is He) has commanded, Allāh will certainly relieve him of the burden of every sin at which his eyes have ever looked, or of which his tongue has ever spoken. If any servant [of the Lord] is careful to wash his hands, as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has commanded, Allāh will certainly relieve him of the burden of every sin that his hands have ever touched.

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[104] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his own father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **Abū Umāma** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

> Then, if he wipes his head and his ears, as Allāh (Exalted is He) has commanded, Allāh will certainly relieve him of the burden of every sin to which his ears have ever listened.
>
> Then, if he washes his feet as Allāh (Exalted is He) has commanded, Allāh will certainly relieve him of the burden of every sin to which his feet have walked, until he stands ready to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. That ritual prayer will therefore be an excellent one.
>
> If any servant [of the Lord] falls asleep in a state of ritual purity, while practicing remembrance [*dhikr*], then offers a prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*] as soon as he recovers consciousness, his supplication is sure to receive a positive response. If any servant [of the Lord] throws a spear, in fighting for the cause of Allāh [*fī sabīli 'llāh*] (Almighty and Glorious is He), regardless of whether he hits his target or misses his mark, he will surely be rewarded for his effort, as he would for the freeing of a slave.
>
> If any servant [of the Lord] grows one gray hair, while fighting for Allāh's cause [*fī sabīli 'llāh*], he will surely be granted compensation for it, in the form of a light on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*].
>
> If any servant [of the Lord] emancipates a slave, that freed slave will surely be his ransom from the Fire of Hell [*Nār Jahannam*], one limb for every limb.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā',[105] al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> If someone performs the [prescribed] ritual prayer of daybreak [*ṣalāt al-ghadāh*] in his place of worship [*masjid*], then remains in a sitting posture, remembering Allāh (Exalted is He) until the suns rises—and if, once it has risen, he praises Allāh (Exalted is He) and stands up to perform two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*rak'atain*]—Allāh will grant him, for each cycle, a million [*alf alf*] palatial mansions in the Garden of Paradise. Inside each palatial mansion, there will be a million heavenly brides [*ḥawrā'*],[106] and each heavenly bride will be accompanied by a million menservants. Moreover, in the sight of Allāh, that worshipper will be one of those who truly repent [*al-awwābīn*].[107]

As reported on the authority of Nāfi', it was Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said: "When Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed the ritual

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[105] ***Author's note:*** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[106] See note 9 on p. 9 above.

[107] This is an allusion to the verse [*āya*] of the Qur'ān:

Your Lord is best aware of what is in your souls. If you are righteous, He is ever Forgiving to those who truly repent. (17:25)	*Rabbu-kum a'lamu bi-mā fī nufūsi-kum* *in takūnū ṣāliḥīna fa-inna-hu kāna* *li'l-awwābīna Ghafūrā.*

prayer of dawn *[salla 'l-fajr]*, he would not get up from his sitting position *[majlis]*, until the prayer itself enabled him to do so."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a worshipper performs the [prescribed] ritual prayer of daybreak *[salāt as-subh]*, then stays in his sitting position *[majlis]* until the prayer itself enables him [to get up], that prayer will be at the same degree as a Pilgrimage *[Hajj]* and a Visitation *['Umra]*, both of which have been accepted.

When Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) performed the [prescribed] ritual prayer of daybreak *[salāt al-ghadāh]*, he used to remain in a sitting posture until the rising of the sun. Someone asked him: "Why do you do this?" So he explained: "I regard it as the established customary practice *[sunna]*."[108]

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā',[109] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a worshipper performs the [prescribed] ritual prayer of the dawn *[salāt as-fajr]*, in a congregation *[jamā'a]*, then withdraws in seclusion *['akafa]* until the rising of the sun, then performs four consecutive cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer *[raka'āt mutawāliyāt]*, reciting in the first cycle *[rak'a]*:
>
> - the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātihat al-Kitāb]*,
> - the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[110]—three times, and
> - the Sūra that begins with:
>
> Say: "He is Allāh, One!" (112:1)   *qul Huwa 'llāhu Ahad.*
>
> —seven times; then, in the second cycle *[rak'a]*:
>
> - the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātihat al-Kitāb]*—one time only, and:
> - the Sūra that begins with:
>
> By the sun and its brightness. (91:1)   *wa 'sh-shamsi wa duhā-hā*
>
> —then, in the third cycle *[rak'a]*:
>
> - the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātihat al-Kitāb]*, and:
> - the Sūra that begins with:
>
> By the heaven and the morning star. (86:1)   *wa 's-samā'i wa 't-tāriq*

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[108] See n. 57 on p. 52 above.

[109] **Author's note**: Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—'Ikrima—Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[110] Q. 2:225

> and then, in the fourth cycle *[rak'a]*:
>
> - the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]*, and
> - the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*—one time only, and
> - the Sūra that begins with:
>
> Say: "He is Allāh, One!" (112:1) *qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad*
>
> —three times, Allāh (Exalted is He) will send seventy angels to him, ten angels from each of the seven heavens. They will come bearing trays peculiar to the Garden of Paradise, as well as handkerchiefs *[manādīl]* peculiar to the Garden of Paradise, and they will load that prayer *[ṣalāt]* onto those trays, then they will carry it aloft. Whenever they pass by a company of the angels, they will seek forgiveness on behalf of the owner of the prayer, and when it is placed between the hands of the All-Compelling One *[al-Jabbār]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will say: "My servant, you have performed the ritual prayer for My sake *[lī ṣallaita]*, and Me you have worshipped *[wa-lī 'abadta]*, so start work anew, for I have forgiven you!"

This ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* provides us with an explanatory interpretation *[tafsīr]* of the following saying, reported by Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) from his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> O son of Adam, you must perform, for My sake, four cycles of ritual prayer *[ṣalli arba'a raka'āt]* in the first part of the day, so that I may grant you sufficient recompense for so doing.

Some of the commentators have interpreted this as referring to the ritual prayer of the dawn *[ṣalāt]*, [counting the two cycles of] its obligatory performance *[farḍ]* and [the two cycles of] its customarily recommended counterpart *[masnūn]*. The correct interpretation, however, is the one we have mentioned above.

Concerning the second litany *[wird]* of the daytime.

As for the second litany *[wird]* of the daytime, it coincides with the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*,[111] which is also known as the ritual prayer of those who truly repent *[ṣalāt al-awwābīn]*.[112]

Is the regular performance of this prayer a recommended practice, or not? There are two conflicting answers to this question, according to the doctrine of our [Ḥanbalī] colleagues. The basic guidance on this subject is contained in the following traditional reports:

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā',[113] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]* is the ritual prayer of those who truly repent *[ṣalāt al-awwābīn]*.

According to another report, transmitted by the same chain of authorities *[isnād]*, he also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]* is the greater part of the ritual prayer of David *[ṣalāt Dāwūd]* (peace be upon him).

Shaikh Abū Naṣr has informed us[114] that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> One of the gates of the Garden of Paradise is called "The Forenoon *[aḍ-Ḍuḥā]*." When the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]* is at hand, an angelic herald will cry out: "Where are those who used to perform the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*, making it their regular practice? Cause them to enter the Garden of Paradise, through the mercy of Allāh!"

[111] See n. 98 on p. 83 above.

[112] See n. 107 on p. 87 above.

[113] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, **Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr—Abū Salama—Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[114] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

In the time of the Commander of the Faithful *[Amīr al-Mu'minīn]*, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, and that of 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), the worshippers used to perform the [prescribed] ritual prayer of daybreak *[ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ]*, then they would wait for the moment assigned to the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*, and perform it in the mosque *[masjid]*.

As reported on the authority of aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Qais, Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "At a certain stage in time, we realized that we did not understand the significance of this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*.

They proclaim the glory [of the Lord]	*yusabbiḥūna*
in the evening and at sunrise.	*bi'l-'ashiyyi wa'l-ishrāq*.
(38:18)	

—until we noticed people performing the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*.

It was Ibn Abī Makīla (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Someone asked Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) about the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*, so he replied: 'It is definitely mentioned in the Book of Allāh (Exalted is He).'" Then he recited this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*:

In houses [of worship]	*fī buyūtin*
Allāh has allowed to be raised up,	*adhina 'llāhu an turfa'a*
and in which [He has allowed]	*wa yudhkara*
His Name to be commemorated;	*fī-ha 'smu-hu*
glorifying Him therein,	*yusabbiḥu la-hu*
in the mornings and the evenings	*fī-hā bi'l-ghuduwwi wa 'l-āṣāl*
(24:36)'	

"Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) would often perform the two cycles of the forenoon prayer *[rak'atayi 'ḍ-ḍuḥā]*, but he did not become completely addicted to it."

This explains why, when 'Ikrima was asked about how Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) performed the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*, he replied: "He used to perform it one day, then leave it out for ten."

It was an-Nakha'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "They [the Companions] used to disapprove of making the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[salāt ad-duhā]* a regular practice, so they would sometimes perform it, and sometimes leave it out, to keep it from acquiring the same status as those prayers that are strictly prescribed *[maktūba]*."

Concerning the number of cycles [*raka'āt*] to be performed in the forenoon prayer [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*].[115]

As for the number of cycles [*raka'āt*] required in the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*], the minimum is two cycles, the best medium is eight cycles, and the maximum is twelve cycles. With respect to the two cycles [*rak'atān*], as we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā',[116] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Within the human body there are three hundred and sixty joints. It is therefore incumbent upon the human being to make a charitable donation on behalf of every single joint—one charitable donation [*ṣadaqa*] each day [of the year].

His listeners asked: "And who is capable of that, O Messenger of Allāh?" So he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> [It will count as a charitable donation] if someone notices a clot of phlegm or mucus in the mosque [*masjid*], and takes the trouble to bury it, or if he clears some nuisance from the path. If he cannot [do anything like that], the two cycles of the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*] will adequately compensate for it.

We may also cite the traditional report [*ḥadīth*] of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who said: "My bosom friend [*khalīlī*] Abu'l-Qāsim[117] (Allāh bless him and give him peace) alerted me to the value of three practices: (1) the *witr* prayer before going to sleep, (2) devoting three days out of every month to fasting, and (3) the two cycles of the forenoon prayer [*rak'atai 'ḍ-ḍuḥā*]."

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[115] See note 98 on p. 83 above.

[116] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his own father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from 'Abdu'llāh ibn Buraida—his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[117] See n. 51 on p. 43 above.

According to one traditional report, however, four cycles are required. This has been mentioned in a previous subsection, where we cited the relevant saying *[hadīth]* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), transmitted by 'Ikrima on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

As reported by Mu'ādha, 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: "The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[salāt ad-duhā]*, sometimes as a prayer of four, but then sometimes as one of six cycles *[raka'āt]*."

As reported on the authority of Ḥamīd at-Ṭawīl, it was Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to perform the the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[salāt ad-duhā]*, sometimes as a prayer of six cycles, but then sometimes as one of eight cycles *[raka'āt]*."

According to another report, this one transmitted on the authority of 'Ikrima ibn Khālid, it was Umm Hāni' bint Abū Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with her) who said: "When Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) approached [the city], at the time of the conquest—the conquest of Mecca *[fath Makka]*—he made a halt on the upper side of Mecca, while he performed a ritual prayer of eight cycles *[raka'āt]*. So I asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, what is this ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*?" He said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "The ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt ad-duhā]*."

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) declared: "It is reliably established," and the preferred choice, in the opinion of the experts in religious knowledge (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them all), is definitely eight cycles *[raka'āt]*.[118] Should further confirmation be needed, we could cite yet another traditional report, transmitted by Abū Sa'īd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) from the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

As far as 'Ā'isha is concerned (may Allāh be well pleased with her), she is also reported as having performed the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[salāt ad-duhā]* as a prayer of eight cycles *[raka'āt]*. In the words of al-Qāsim ibn Muhammad (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) would often perform the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[salāt ad-duhā]* as a prayer of eight cycles

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[118] See note 98 on p. 83 above.

That could be the time it takes to perform four cycles of prayer *[raka‘āt]*, or it may only be enough for two cycles *[rak‘atain]*.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Two cycles of ritual prayer *[rak‘atain]*, performed by the servant [of the Lord] in the middle of the night, are better than this world and all that it contains. But for the hardship it would have caused my Community *[Ummati]*, I would have made them obligatory.

All of this was intended to make it easy for his Community *[Umma]* to keep night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]* and to practice worshipful service *[‘ibāda]*. He did not wish it to be burdensome for them, and for worshipful service to be unpleasant for them, so that they would become weary and bored. Far from it! He simply steered them (Allāh bless him and give him peace) toward the keeping of night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]*, by mentioning its excellent merit and its spiritual reward, so that they would not confine themselves exclusively to the obligatory religious duties *[farā’iḍ]* and established customary practices *[sunan]*.[57]

For the keeping of vigil, one third is the fraction of the night that is most strongly recommended, while the least recommended is one sixth. This is because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never once kept vigil throughout the whole of a night until morning. He would always take some sleep in the course of it. Nor did he ever sleep throughout the whole of a night until morning. He would always keep vigil during some part of it, as we have explained.

It has been said that the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* of the first part of the night is for those who observe *tahajjud*;[58] the vigil *[qiyām]* kept in the middle part of it is for the humbly devout *[qānitīn]*; the vigil kept in the last part of it is for worshippers devoted to the ritual prayer *[muṣallīn]*; and the vigil kept at the break of dawn *[qiyām al-fajr]* is for the heedless.

Yūsuf ibn Mihrān (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "Beneath the Heavenly Throne *[‘Arsh]*, as I have been informed, there is an angel in the shape of a rooster *[dīk]*. Its talons are of pearl and its spurs of green topaz. When the first third of

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[57] The term *sunna* (of which *sunan* is the plural form) may be applied to a particular practice recommended by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as well as to his exemplary conduct in general. Although there are no capital letters in the Arabic script, it is convenient to mark the distinction, in transliteration, between the specific *sunna*/*sunan* and the general *Sunna*.

[58] See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

> recorded as one of those who practice remembrance. If someone performs six, no sin will stick to him that day, unless it be that of associating partners *[shirk]* with Allāh (Exalted is He). If someone performs twelve cycles of prayer, a house will be constructed for him in the Garden of Paradise.

When Abū Dharr heard this, he said: "O Messenger of Allāh, [should they be performed] in combination, or separately?" He replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "You need not concern yourself with that *[lā 'alaik]*."

◆

and the cumulative effect of negligence and heedlessness. Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

> And He has made unbelief and iniquity and disobedience detestable to you. (49:7)

In other words, He has informed us that He has made sinful disobedience hateful to the believers, so it cannot be permissible to reproach a believer for disobedience when he has repented *[tāba]* and returned to obedience *[anāba]*. Far from reproaching the penitent, his fellow believers should offer prayers on his behalf, pleading for his repentance to be confirmed, and for him to be granted support and protection.

(d) They should spend time in his company, enter into conversation with him, and single him out for special attention.

4. Allāh (Exalted is He) will also honor the penitent with four noble favors:

(a) He will rid him of every trace of sin, as if he had never sinned at all.

(b) Allāh (Exalted is He) will love him.

(c) He will protect him from Satan, who will not be allowed to have power over him.

(d) He will grant him security from fear, even before He removes him from this world, because He has said (Exalted is He):

> The angels descend upon them, saying: "Do not fear and do not grieve, but hear good tidings of the Garden [of Paradise] that you have been promised." (41:30)

◆

It is also known as the ritual prayer of those who humble themselves *[salāt al-mukhbitīn]*. The best time for its performance is when the heat of the day is extremely intense. If a worshipper has not performed it by the time he performs the [prescribed] ritual prayer of noon *[salāt az-zuhr]*, he should make up for it later, in accordance with the [abovementioned] recommendation *[istihbāb]*.

Concerning the Qur'ānic recitation appropriate to the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*.

As for the Qur'ānic recitation appropriate to the the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*, Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> The ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]* should include the recitation of the Sūra [that begins with]:
>
> By the sun and its brightness. (91:1) *wa 'sh-shamsi wa ḍuḥā-hā*
>
> —and [the Sūra of] the Bright Forenoon *[Sūrat aḍ-Ḍuḥā]*.[125]

According to one traditional report,[126] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When a worshipper performs the twelve cycles of the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*, he should recite in each cycle *[rak'a]*:
>
> - the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]*—one time only,
> - the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[127]—one time only, and
> - [the Sūra that begins with]:
>
> Say: "He is Allāh, One!" (112:1) *qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad*—three times.
>
> Seventy thousand angels will thereupon descend from every heaven, bearing white sheets of paper and pens made of light, and they will go on recording good deeds in his favor, until the blast is blown on the Trumpet. Then, when the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]* has arrived, the angels will come to him, and each of the angels will bring a fine suit of clothes and a gift. They will stand by his grave, and they will say: "O occupant of the grave, arise, by the permission of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), for you are one of those who are safe and secure *[āminīn]*."

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[125] The Sūra of the Bright Forenoon *[Sūrat aḍ-Ḍuḥā]* is the 93rd Sūra of the Qur'ān. (In some translations, it is entitled "The Sūra of the Morning Hours.")

[126] **Author's note:** The chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report goes back to: 'Urwa ibn Shu'aib—his father—his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[127] Q. 2:255.

> he will respond to their question by saying: "O lovely good ladies, this is the first night of the month of Ramaḍān, the night when the gates of the Garden of Paradise are opened for the sake of those members of the Community *[Umma]* of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who are keeping the fast."
>
> In confirmation of these words, Allāh (Exalted is He) will promptly say: "O Riḍwān, open the gates of all the Gardens of Paradise! O Mālik,[108] shut the doors of the Blazing Fire of Hell *[Jaḥīm]*, to keep out those members of the Community *[Umma]* of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who are keeping the fast. O Gabriel, go down to the earth below, shackle the defiant and rebellious devils *[marada ash-shayāṭīn]*, and tie them up securely with fetters and chains. Then cast them into the deepest depths of the oceans, so that they cannot meddle with the Community of My beloved friend *[ḥabībī]*, Muhammad, and spoil their experience of fasting."

According to this same report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then went on to say:

> On each and every night of the month of Ramaḍān, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will say three times: "Does anyone have a request to make, so that I may grant his request? Is there anyone who wishes to repent, so that I may relent toward him and accept his repentance? Is there anyone wishing to seek forgiveness, so that I may forgive him? Who would make a loan to a rich man, as opposed to one who is impoverished, and to a person who is fully in control of his affairs, as opposed to one who is the victim of injustice?"

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued further:

> On each and every day of the month of Ramaḍān, by the time when the fast is duly broken *[ifṭār]*, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will have delivered a million of His servants from the Fire of Hell, even though all of them had incurred the penalty of damnation. Moreover, when the night of the Day of Congregation *[Jum'a]* comes around, and on the Day of Congregation itself, it will be during every single hour that Allāh (Exalted is He) delivers a million of His servants from the Fire of Hell, even though all of them had incurred the penalty of damnation. As for what will happen on the last day of the month of Ramaḍān, on that day Allāh will deliver a number equal to the total of all those He has delivered between the first of the month and the last.
>
> As soon as the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* has arrived, Allāh (Exalted is He) will give the order to Gabriel (peace be upon him), who will promptly descend to the earth below, traveling in a throng of angels and bearing a green banner, which he will set up on top of the Ka'ba. Gabriel (peace be upon him) has no fewer than six hundred wings, which he only unfolds on the Night of Power

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[108] As an ordinary adjectival noun, the Arabic word *mālik* means "one who exercises control." The angel Mālik is charged with the custody of Hell and the supervision of its inmates, as they suffer the torments of damnation. Unlike Riḍwān, his counterpart in Paradise, Mālik is mentioned by name in the Qur'ān, where Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

And they shall cry out: "O Mālik, let your	*wa nādaw yā Māliku*
Lord make an end of us!" But he will say:	*li-yaqḍi 'alai-nā Rabbu-k.*
"Here you must surely remain." (43:77)	*qāla inna-kum mākithūn.*

apartment, so those who were present stood behind him and performed the prayer too."

Then again, whenever ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) intended to perform it, she would lock the door. As for Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), he would perform it one day, then leave it out for ten.

Concerning the third litany *[wird]* of the daytime.

As for the third litany *[wird]* of the daytime, it coincides with the [voluntary] ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* before and after the [prescribed prayer of] noon *[qabla'ẓ-ẓuhr wa ba'da-hā]*. According to the traditional report we have received from Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā',[129] [the Prophet's wife] Umm Ḥabība (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said:

"If a worshipper performs four [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[raka'āt]* before the [prescribed prayer of] noon *[ẓuhr]*, and four after it, Allāh (Exalted is He) will make his flesh unlawful to the Fire of Hell."

It has been said that the gates of Heaven are held open, as are those of the Garden of Paradise, from just after the sun's decline from the meridian *[zawāl]*, until the noon prayer *[ẓuhr]* is performed. This explains why prayers of supplication *[da'awāt]*, as it has also been said, are sure to be answered at this hour. It also explains why one is recommended to make a constant practice, at this hour, of worshipful service *['ibāda]*, supplication *[du'ā']*, and remembrance *[dhikr]*.

Highly relevant, in this context, is the traditional report *[ḥadīth]* from Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who said: "The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to devote himself assiduously to four cycles of prayer *[raka'āt]* before the [prescribed prayer of] noon *[ẓuhr]*. People were curious about this, so he explained (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> The gates of the Garden of Paradise are held open at the moment of the sun's decline from the meridian *[zawāl]*, and they are not bolted shut until the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* is begun. So I like to be well to the fore!

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[129] **Author's note**: Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from Umm Ḥabība (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) was once asked: “To which ritual prayer *[salāt]* was Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) most fond of applying himself with special diligence?” To this she replied (may Allāh be well pleased with her): “He used to perform four [cycles of prayer] (Allāh bless him and give him peace) before the [prescribed prayer of] noon *[zuhr]*, prolonging the standing posture *[qiyām]* in each of them, and making the very best, in each of them, of the acts of bowing *[rukū‘]* and prostration *[sujūd]*.”

Concerning the fourth litany *[wird]* of the daytime.

As for the fourth litany *[wird]* of the daytime, it is performed in the interval between the [prescribed ritual prayers of] noon *[ẓuhr]* and afternoon *[ʿaṣr]*.

Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannāʾ has informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,[130] that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone enlivens the interval between the [prescribed ritual prayers of] noon *[ẓuhr]* and afternoon *[ʿaṣr]*, Allāh will keep his heart alive, even on the day when [all other] hearts die.

Tradition tells us that Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) used to enliven the interval between the [prescribed ritual prayers of] noon *[ẓuhr]* and afternoon *[ʿaṣr]*.

Ibrāhīm an-Nakhaʿī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "They [the early believers] used to liken the [voluntary] ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* performed between the two [prescribed] evening prayers *[al-ʿishāʾain]*,[131] and that performed between the [prescribed ritual prayers of] noon *[ẓuhr]* and afternoon *[ʿaṣr]*, to the ritual prayer of the nighttime *[ṣalāt al-lail]*.[132] That was the regular practice of many of the servants [of the Lord], for they used to perform their litany-prayers *[yuṣallūna aurāda-hum]* between the [prescribed ritual prayers of] noon *[ẓuhr]* and afternoon *[ʿaṣr]*. During this hour, they would isolate themselves from creatures *[khalq]*, and devote work, O deceiver!" Let us therefore take refuge with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) from hypocritical display *[riyā']*, from promoting an undeserved reputation *[sum'a]*, and from hypocrisy itself *[nifāq]*, for that is the work of those who are doomed to the Fire of Hell.

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[130] **Author's note**: Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannāʾ cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Bannāʾ—ʿUmar ibn Aḥmad—ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Muḥammad—Ṣāliḥ ibn Mālik—Jaʿfar ibn ʿUmar—Yūnus ibn ʿAmra—ʿAṭāʾ—Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[131] That is to say, between the prescribed prayers of sunset *[maghrib]* and late evening *[ʿishāʾ]*. (See pp. 27–30 above.)

[132] See pp. 68 and 82 above.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

Surely the hypocrites	*inna 'l-munāfiqīna*
will be in the lowest	*fi 'd-darki 'l-asfali*
depth of the Fire [of Hell]. (4:145)	*mina 'n-nār.*

In other words, they will be in the Pit *[al-Hāwiya]*,[494] in the company of Pharaoh *[Fir'aun]* and Hāmān and their people.

As someone might well see fit to interject at this point, it seems be suggested, in at least one of the traditional reports *[akhbār]*, that there is actually no harm in having our religious practice noticed by our fellow creatures. According to the report in question,[495] it was Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

"A man came to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, I perform my religious practice, intending to keep it private, but I find that people are watching, and that pleases me. If such be the case, am I entitled to any reward?' To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'You are entitled to two rewards: the reward for the secrecy, and the reward for the publicity.'"

To resolve what may appear to be a contradiction, this should be construed as follows: What made that man feel pleased, was the fact that people followed the example he was setting, in the performance of his religious practice. Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was aware of this, so he told the man, in effect: "You are entitled to two rewards: one reward for your righteous work, and one reward for having people follow your good example." As he once said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If someone establishes a good custom *[sanna sunnatan ḥasana]*, he is entitled to the reward for it, and also to the reward of all those who practice it, until the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*....[496]

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[494] This is an allusion to Q. 101:6–11.

[495] **Author's note.** For this traditional report, the chain of transmission goes back through the following links: **Wakī'—Sufyān—Habīb—Abū Ṣāliḥ—Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[496] **Author's note:** This is a partial quotation of the saying *[ḥadīth]*, which continues in the same vein.

A traditional saying *[ḥadīth]* that refers in general to supererogatory devotions *[nawāfil]* at these times.

In one traditional saying *[ḥadīth]* that has come down to us, we find a general reference to all supererogatory devotions *[nawāfil]* at these particular times of the day. According to this report, which has been conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr, with a list of transmitting authorities,[134] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a worshipper performs six cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer *[ṣallā sitta raka'āt]*, after the [prescribed prayer of] sunset *[ba'da'l-maghrib]* and before he has talked to anybody, they will be raised up for him to the Highest Heaven *['Illiyūn]*. He will be just like someone who is present on the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* in the Farthest Mosque *[al-Masjid al-Aqṣā]*,[135] and that is better than devoting half a night to vigil. These devotions are referred to in the words of Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He):

They used to sleep only a little	*kānū qalīlan mina 'l-laili*
during the night,	*mā yahja'ūn:*
and with the dawning of each day	*wa bi'l-asḥāri*
they would seek forgiveness.	*hum yastaghfirūn.*
(51:17,18)	

> —and in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Their sides shun their couches,	*tatajāfā junūbu-hum 'ani 'l-maḍāji'i*
as they call on their Lord	*yad'ūna Rabba-hum*
in fear and hope. (32:16)	*khaufan wa ṭama'ā.*

> —and also in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

And he entered the city	*wa dakhala 'l-madīnata*
at a time when its people	*'alā ḥīni ghaflatin*
were unheeding, and there	*min ahli-hā fa-wajada*
he found two men fighting.	*fī-hā rajulaini yaqtatilāni*

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[134] **Author's note**: Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Ḥāfiẓ—Muḥammad ibn Badr al-Ḥumairī—Ḥammād ibn Mudrik—'Uthmān ibn 'Abdi'llāh ash-Shāmī—Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm—'Abdu'llāh ibn Abī Sa'īd—Ṭāwūs—'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[135] **Author's note**: That is to say, in the Mosque of the Temple [in Jerusalem] *[Masjid Bait al-Maqdis]*.

the one was of his own party,	*hādhā min shī'ati-hi*
and the other was of his enemies.	*wa hādhā min 'aduwwi-h:*
Then the one who was	*fa-'staghātha-hu 'lladhī*
of his own party appealed to him	*min shī'ati-hi*
for help against the other	*'ala 'lladhī min*
who was of his enemies.	*'aduwwi-hi*
So Moses struck him with his fist,	*fa-wakaza-hu Mūsā*
and dispatched him.	*fa-qaḍā 'alai-h:*
He said: "This is of Satan's doing,	*qāla hādhā min 'amali 'sh-shaiṭān:*
he is surely an enemy,	*inna-hu 'aduwwun*
an obvious misleader. (28:15)	*muḍillun mubīn*

> If a worshipper performs four [voluntary cycles], after the [prescribed] ritual prayer of late evening *[al-'ishā' al-ākhira]*, he will be just like one who arrives in time to experience the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]* in the Sacred Mosque *[Masjid al-Ḥarām]*."
>
> If a worshipper performs four [voluntary cycles] before the [prescribed prayer of] noon *[ẓuhr]*, and four after it, Allāh (Exalted is He) will forbid the Fire of Hell ever to consume his physical body.
>
> If a worshipper performs four [voluntary cycles] before the [prescribed prayer of the] afternoon *['aṣr]*, Allāh will record him as entitled to immunity from the Fire of Hell.

As reported by Nāfi', on the authority of Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> The two cycles of the ritual prayer of daybreak *[rak'atā 'l-fajr]* are dearer to me than this world and all that it contains.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr,[136] 'Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh ennoble his countenance) was once asked about the supererogatory worship *[taṭawwu']* of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so he said: "Who is capable of that? He used to wait until the sun was as far to his left as it would be to his right at the time of the [prescribed prayer of the] afternoon *['aṣr]*, at which point he would perform two cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer *[rak'atain]*.[137] When it was as far to his left as it would to his right at the time of [the prescribed prayer of] noon *[ẓuhr]*, he would perform four [voluntary cycles of prayer]. When the sun declined from the meridian, he would perform four [prescribed cycles of prayer]. He would then perform two

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[136] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from 'Alī (may Allāh ennoble his countenance).

[137] When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was in Medina, and facing the Qibla [direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca], the sun would rise on his left and set on his right.

O Allāh, You are the First,	*Allāhumma Anta 'l-Awwalu*
for there is nothing before You,	*fa-laisa qabla-ka shai'*
and You are the Last,	*wa Anta 'l-Ākhiru*
for there is nothing after You,	*fa-laisa ba'da-ka shai'*
and You are the Outer,	*wa Anta 'ẓ-Ẓāhiru*
for there is nothing above You,	*fa-laisa fauqa-ka shai'*
and You are the Inner,	*wa Anta 'l-Bāṭinu*
for there is nothing below You.	*fa-laisa dūna-ka shai'*
Settle the debt for me,	*iqḍi 'an-nī 'd-daina*
and relieve me of poverty.	*wa aghni 'an-nī 'l-faqr*

* * *

Concerning the fifth litany [*wird*] of the daytime.

As for the fifth litany [*wird*] of the daytime, it is performed in the interval between the [prescribed] ritual prayer of the afternoon [*ṣalāt al-'aṣr*] and the setting of the sun. It consists entirely of remembrance [*dhikr*], in the form of glorifying the Lord [*tasbīḥ*],[139] affirming His Uniqueness [*tahlīl*],[140] seeking His forgiveness [*istighfār*], reflecting on the Heavenly Kingdom [*tafakkur fi 'l-Malakūt*], and reciting the Qur'ān, because the performance of supererogatory ritual prayer [*ṣalāt an-nāfila*] is forbidden during this period of time.

Before the setting of the sun, the worshipper should recite [the Sūras that begin with]:

By the sun and its brightness.... (91:1)	*wa 'sh-shamsi wa ḍuḥā-hā*....

—and:

By the night when it is enshrouding.... (92:1)	*wa 'l-laili idhā yaghshā*....

Then he should recite the Two Pleas for Refuge [*al-Mu'awwidhatain*],[141] thereby marking the end of his day. He should also begin his night by reciting the Qur'ān and seeking refuge [*isti'ādha*].

As reported on the authority of al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said, while mentioning the mercy of his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He):

> Allāh (Exalted is He) has said: "O son of Adam, remember Me after the ritual prayer of the daybreak [*ṣalāt al-fajr*], for an hour, and after the ritual prayer of the afternoon [*ṣalāt al-'aṣr*], for an hour, for then I shall protect you in the interval between the two."

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[139] See n. 11 on p. 9 above.

[140] See n. 10 on p. 9 above.

[141] That is to say, the two Sūras that begin with:

Say: "I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak." (113:1)	*qul a'ūdhu* *bi-Rabbi 'l-falaq*

— and:

Say: "I take refuge with the Lord of mankind." (114:1)	*qul a'ūdhu* *bi-Rabbi 'n-nās*.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Concerning the five daily ritual prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]*, with an account of their times of performance, their customary elements *[sunan]*, and their special qualities.

1.

Concerning the number of cycles *[rakaʿāt]* to be performed in each of the prescribed ritual prayers.

The prescribed ritual prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-maktūba]* are five in number, namely:

1. The dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]*, which consists of two cycles *[rakʿatān]*.
2. The noon prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*, which consists of four cycles *[arbaʿ rakaʿāt]*.
3. The afternoon prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr]*, which consists of four cycles *[arbaʿ rakaʿāt]*.
4. The sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*, which consists of three cycles *[thalāth rakaʿāt]*.
5. The late evening prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ]*, the last of the five, which consists of four cycles *[arbaʿ rakaʿāt]*.

This adds up to a daily total of seventeen cycles *[sabʿ ʿashara rakʿa]*.

Fifty prayers had been prescribed as obligatory on the Night of the Heavenly Ascension *[Lailat al-Miʿrāj]*, the night when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was transported on his Heavenly Journey *[Isrāʾ]*. But then the number was brought back down to five, as a dispensation of wisdom *[ḥikma]* on the part of Allāh, so that the burden He still imposed would seem light and easy, in contrast with that from which He had exempted His believing servants. By a similar act of dispensation, He relieved them of the duty to stand firm in battle with the unbelievers *[kāfirīn]* when the ratio was ten to one against them, and reduced the ratio to that of two to one against them. He likewise canceled the prohibition of eating, drinking, and engaging in sexual intercourse after sleep during the nights of fasting [in the month of Ramaḍān], by His pronouncement:

It has been made lawful for you,	*uḥilla la-kum*
on the night of the Fast,	*lailata 'ṣ-ṣiyāmi 'r-rafathu*
to go in to your wives;	*ilā nisā'i-kum:*
they are a garment for you,	*hunna libāsun la-kum*
and you are a garment for them.	*wa antum libāsun la-hun.*
Allāh knows that you have been	*'alima 'llāhu anna-kum kuntum*
deceiving yourselves, and He has	*takhtānūna anfusa-kum*
relented toward you and pardoned you.	*fa-tāba 'alai-kum wa 'afā 'an-kum:*
So now have intercourse with them,	*fa-'l-āna bāshirū-hunna*
and seek that which	*wa 'btaghū mā*
Allāh has prescribed for you.	*kataba 'llāhu la-kum:*
And eat and drink until the white	*wa kulū wa 'shrabū ḥattā yatabayyana*
thread becomes distinct to you from	*la-kumu 'l-khaiṭu 'l-abyaḍu*
the black thread of the dawn. (2:187)	*mina 'l-khaiṭi 'l-aswadi mina 'l-fajr.*

All this had previously been declared unlawful for them.

⁂

Concerning the need to make a constant practice of *tahajjud*,[66] after one has received a blessing through the observance of night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]* and the performance of certain supererogatory devotions *[nawāfil]*.

When someone has received a blessing through the observance of night vigil *[qiyām al-lail]*, and the performance of certain supererogatory devotions *[nawāfil]*, it is incumbent upon him to make a constant practice of *tahajjud*, provided that he is capable of doing so, and that he has no valid excuse for not doing so.

This assertion is based on the fact that, according to a report from 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone embarks on an act of worshipful service *['ibāda]* for the sake of Allāh (Glory be to Him), but then abandons it on account of boredom, Allāh (Exalted is He) will despise him.

Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) also said: "If sleep overwhelmed him, or if he was sick, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would not keep vigil that night. He would perform twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer during the daytime [instead]."

As stated in the traditional report *[khabar]*: "Of all good works, that which is dearest to Allāh (Exalted is He) is that which is most diligently and persistently performed, even if it does not amount to very much."

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[66] See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

That is to say: **"So proclaim the glory of Allāh** by performing the ritual prayers for the sake of Allāh:[144] **When you enter upon the evening time,** perform the sunset and late evening prayers *[ṣalāt al-maghrib wa 'l-'ishā'],* **when you enter upon the morning time,** perform the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr],* **when the sun is well on the wane,** perform the afternoon prayer *[ṣalāt al-'aṣr],* **and when you enter upon the noontime hour,** perform the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]."*

b) He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Surely the ritual prayer is a timed	*inna 'ṣ-ṣalāta kānat 'ala 'l-mu'minīna*
prescription for the believers. (4:103)	*kitāban mawqūtā*

c) He has said (Exalted is He):

And perform the ritual prayer	*wa aqimi 'ṣ-ṣalāta*
at the two ends of the day and	*ṭarafayi 'n-nahāri*
in some watches of the night.	*wa zulafan mina 'l-lail.*
(11:114)	

d) He has also said (Exalted is He):

Perform the ritual prayer	*aqimi 'ṣ-ṣalāta*
at the sinking of the sun. (17:78)	*li-dulūki 'sh-shamsi.*

In other words, at its setting *[ghurūb]*; or, according to some authorities, at the time of its decline from the meridian *[zawāl]*.

e) He has said (Magnificent is His Majesty Sublime):

And extol the praise of your Lord	*wa sabbiḥ bi-ḥamdi Rabbi-ka*
before the rising of the sun,	*qabla ṭulū'i 'sh-shamsi*
and before its setting, and extol	*wa qabla ghurūbi-hā:*
[the praise of your Lord]	
in the watches of the night,	*wa min ānā'i 'l-laili*
and at the ends of the day, so that	*fa-sabbiḥ wa aṭrāfa 'n-nahāri*
you may earn His good pleasure.	*la'alla-ka tarḍā.*
(20:130)	

Qatāda[145] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has offered the following interpretation of this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*:

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[144] During the Islāmic ritual prayer *[ṣalāt],* the glorification of the Lord *[tasbīḥ]* is uttered each time the worshipper adopts the postures of bowing *[rukū']* and prostration *[sujūd].* While adopting the bowing posture, one says: "*Subḥāna Rabbiya 'l-'Aẓīm* [Glory to my Lord, the Almighty!]" and when in prostration: "*Subḥāna Rabbiya 'l-A'lā* [Glory to my Lord, the Most High!]"

[145] Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb Qatāda ibn Di'āma ibn Qatāda as-Sadūsī. Learned in Qur'ānic exegesis *[tafsīr]* and Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh],* he was also an authority on Arabic poetry. He died in A.H. 118 (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

"**Before the rising of the sun** comes the dawn prayer *[salāt al-fajr]*; **before its setting** comes the afternoon prayer *[salāt al-'asr]*, **in the watches of the night** come the sunset and late evening prayers *[salāt al-maghrib wa 'l-'ishā']*; **and at the** point between **the ends of the day** comes the midday prayer *[salāt az-zuhr]*."

2. As for the relevant Prophetic traditions *[akhbār]*, it is sufficient to cite the report transmitted on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father). According to this report, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to visit me beside the House [the House of Allāh, the Ka'ba]. There he led me in the midday prayer *[sallā biya 'z-zuhr]*, as soon as the sun had declined from the meridian, just enough to lengthen a shadow by the width of the strap of a sandal *[shirāk]*. Then he led me in the afternoon prayer *[sallā biya 'l-'asr]*, when the length of every shadow had become equal to the height of the corresponding object. Then he led me in the sunset prayer *[sallā biya 'l-maghrib]*, at the time when the person who was fasting broke his fast. Then he led me in the late evening prayer *[sallā biya 'l-'ishā']*, at moment when the final glow of twilight disappeared. Then he led me in the dawn prayer *[sallā biya 'l-fajr]*, at the point when food and drink became unlawful for anyone who was fasting.
>
> Then he led me again in the midday prayer *[sallā biya 'z-zuhr]*, but this time it was when the length of every shadow had become equal to the height of the corresponding object. Then he led me again in the afternoon prayer *[sallā biya 'l-'asr]*, but this time it was when the length of every shadow had become equal to twice the height of the corresponding object. Then he led me again in the sunset prayer *[sallā biya 'l-maghrib]*, and, as on the previous occasion, he did so at the time when the person who was fasting broke his fast. Then he led me again in the late evening prayer *[sallā biya 'l-'ishā']*, only this time it was near the end of the first third of the night. Then he led me again in the dawn prayer *[sallā biya 'l-fajr]*, only this time it was when the glow of daybreak was already shining bright.
>
> Then he turned to me and said: "O Muhammad, this is the timing of the Prophets *[Anbiyā']* who came before you, and the timing includes the interval between these two precise moments."

This particular tradition *[khabar]* represents our basic source for the appointed times *[mawāqīt]* of the five daily prayers. With respect to this subject, several other Prophetic sayings *[ahādīth]*[146] have been handed down to us, but, since they all convey exactly the same meaning as the one just cited, we have decided to refrain from quoting them here.

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[146] See note 142 on p. 112 above.

3.

Concerning those who performed these prayers *[ṣalawāt]* before the time of our Prophet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

As we learn from one of the Prophetic traditions *[akhbār]*[147] that have been transmitted to us, a man from among the Helpers *[Anṣār]*[148] once asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]*: "Who performed it for the very first time?" So he informed the man that the first person who ever performed it was Adam (peace be upon him). Then he went on to tell him:

"The midday prayer *[ṣalāt az-zuhr]* was performed by Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him), when Allāh (Exalted is He) delivered him from Nimrod's fiery furnace.

"The afternoon prayer *[ṣalāt al-'aṣr]* was performed by Jacob *[Ya'qūb]* (peace be upon him), when Gabriel gave him the news about Joseph *[Yūsuf]* (peace be upon them both).

"The sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]* was performed by David *[Dāwūd]* (peace be upon him), when Allāh relented toward him and accepted his repentance.

"The prayer of the first third of the night *[ṣalāt al-'atama]*[149] was performed by Jonah, the son of Amittai, *[Yūnus ibn Mattai]* (peace be upon him). When Allāh brought him forth from the belly of the whale, he was emaciated like a chicken that has had all its feathers plucked. It was then that Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to him and said: 'Allāh (Exalted is He) pronounces the greeting of peace upon you, and He says to you: "I ask you this with diffidence, in view of the torment I have inflicted on you in the realm of the lower world: Are you well pleased with Me?" So he stood up and performed four cycles *[raka'āt]* of ritual prayer, then he said: 'I am indeed well pleased with my Lord. Yes, I am truly well pleased with my Lord.'"

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[147] See note 142 on p. 112 above.

[148] The Anṣār [the Helpers] were the citizens of Medina who had embraced Islām, and who welcomed and supported the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and the *Muhājirūn* [the Emigrés] at the time of the *Hijra* from Mecca to Medina.

[149] Another name for the late evening prayer *[ṣalāt al-'ishā']*.

4.

Concerning the fact that the first two of the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* to be enjoined upon our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) were the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]* and the sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*.

The first two of the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* that were enjoined upon our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and that he was commanded to perform, were the dawn and sunset prayers *[ṣalāt al-fajr wa 'l-maghrib]*.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) had made the pronouncement:

And extol the praise of your Lord	*wa sabbiḥ bi-ḥamdi Rabbi-ka*
in the evening and early	*bi'l-'ashiyyi*
in the morning. (40:55)	*wa 'l-ibkār.*

His Messenger therefore made it his regular practice (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to perform two cycles *[rak'atain]* of ritual prayer in the early morning *[ghadāh]* and two cycles in the evening *['ashiyy]*. This continued until the Night of the Heavenly Ascension *[Lailat al-Mi'rāj]*, the night when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was transported on his Heavenly Journey *[Isrā']*, at which point five daily prayers *[ṣalawāt]* were prescribed for him.

The dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]* is actually the first prayer of the daytime *[nahār]*, then comes the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*. It is customary, however, for the religious scholars *['ulamā']* to begin their listing and learned treatment of the prayers with the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*. This custom is based on the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* reported by Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

> Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to visit me beside the House [the House of Allāh, the Ka'ba]. There he led me in the midday prayer *[ṣallā biya 'ẓ-ẓuhr]*, as soon as the sun had declined from the meridian, just enough to lengthen a shadow by the width of the strap of a sandal *[shirāk]*.[150]

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[150] See p. 114 above, where the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has already quoted this tradition *[ḥadīth]* in full.

This tradition [*hadīth*] begins with the definition of the timing of the midday prayer [*salāt az-zuhr*]. The scholars have therefore treated the timing [*waqt*] of that prayer as the first of the [five] appointed times [*mawāqīt*], on the grounds that it was the first [of the five daily prayers] to be prescribed as an obligatory religious duty.

As we have already explained, however, the dawn prayer [*salāt al-fajr*] was the one performed by Adam (peace be upon him), and he was the first Prophet [*Nabī*], the first member of the human race to be sent on a mission to the earth. In the most general sense, therefore, the dawn prayer [*salāt al-fajr*] is known to be the first ritual prayer that was ever prescribed as an obligatory religious duty.

5.
Concerning the correct time for the performance of the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]*.

The first moment of the time of the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]* is the crack of the second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]*,[151] which presents itself as a gleam of light in the farthest east, extending beyond the Qibla [the direction of the Kaʿba in Mecca][152] until it rises and stretches across the horizon, then spreads itself over the peaks of the mountains and over the rooftops of the stately mansions and palaces. The final moment of its time is marked by the brilliant glow that immediately precedes the appearance of the eyebrow of the sun. Between these two points there is a fairly wide space of time.

It is considered commendable to refer to this prayer as the daybreak prayer *[ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ]* or the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]*, and not to call it the early morning prayer *[ṣalāt al-ghadāh]*, because Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

And [perform] the recital of dawn;	*wa qur'āna 'l-fajr:*
surely the recital of dawn	*inna qur'āna 'l-fajri*
is witnessed. (17:78)	*kāna mashhūdā.*

That is to say: "The dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]* is witnessed by the angels of the night, as well as by the angels of the day, since it takes place during the last watch of the angels who are charged with keeping records through the night, and during the first watch of the angels who are charged with keeping records through the day (peace be upon them all)."

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[151] The second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]* is also known as the true dawn *[al-fajr aṣ-ṣādiq]*.

[152] The direction of Jerusalem was the first Qibla. According to tradition, it was in the second year of the *Hijra*, in Rajab or Shaʿbān, that the Muslims were commanded to perform their ritual prayers *[ṣalāt]* thenceforth in the direction of the Sacred Mosque *[Masjid al-Ḥarām]* in Mecca, which thus became the second—and permanent—Qibla. In Vol. 3, p. 62, Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) tells us:

As it is said: "The Kaʿba is a Qibla [direction of prayer] for the people of the Mosque, the Mosque is a Qibla for the people of Mecca, Mecca is a Qibla for the people of the Sacred Precinct, and the Sacred Precinct is a Qibla for the people of the earth."

5.
Concerning the correct time for the performance of the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]*.

The first moment of the time of the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]* is the crack of the second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]*,[151] which presents itself as a gleam of light in the farthest east, extending beyond the Qibla [the direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca][152] until it rises and stretches across the horizon, then spreads itself over the peaks of the mountains and over the rooftops of the stately mansions and palaces. The final moment of its time is marked by the brilliant glow that immediately precedes the appearance of the eyebrow of the sun. Between these two points there is a fairly wide space of time.

It is considered commendable to refer to this prayer as the daybreak prayer *[ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ]* or the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]*, and not to call it the early morning prayer *[ṣalāt al-ghadāh]*, because Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

And [perform] the recital of dawn;	*wa qur'āna 'l-fajr:*
surely the recital of dawn	*inna qur'āna 'l-fajri*
is witnessed. (17:78)	*kāna mashhūdā.*

That is to say: "The dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]* is witnessed by the angels of the night, as well as by the angels of the day, since it takes place during the last watch of the angels who are charged with keeping records through the night, and during the first watch of the angels who are charged with keeping records through the day (peace be upon them all)."

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As it is said: "The Ka'ba is a Qibla [direction of prayer] for the people of the Mosque, the Mosque is a Qibla for the people of Mecca, Mecca is a Qibla for the people of the Sacred Precinct, and the Sacred Precinct is a Qibla for the people of the earth."

Concerning the observance of vigil *[qiyām]* throughout the whole of the night.

As for the keeping of vigil *[qiyām]* throughout the whole of the night, that is the practice of the strong, of those who have already been assured of providential care *[ʿināya]* from Him, those for whom custodial protection *[riʿāya]* has been permanently established, those whose hearts have been enveloped by enabling guidance *[tawfīq]*, by the light of Divine Majesty *[Jalāl]* and, then again, of Divine Beauty *[Jamāl]*.

According to traditional reports, ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to enliven the night by performing a single cycle *[rakʿa]* of ritual prayer, in which he would recite the whole of the Qurʾān, from beginning to end. (We have mentioned this in a previous subsection.[59])

Tradition also tells of forty men, from among the Successors *[Tābiʿūn]*, who used to keep vigil throughout the entire night, performing the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-ghadāh]* with the ritual ablution of the last evening prayer *[wuḍūʾ al-ʿishāʾ al-ākhira]*. They made this their practice for forty years. The traditional reports concerning them are of verified authenticity, and have been widely disseminated. Here are the names of some of them:

Saʿīd ibn Jubair, Ṣafwān ibn Salīm, Abū Ḥāzim and Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir (of the people of Medina); Fudail ibn ʿIyād and Wahb ibn al-Ward (of the people of Mecca); Ṭāwūs and Wahb ibn Munabbih (of the people of Yemen); ar-Rabīʿ ibn Khaitham and al-Ḥakam (of the people of Kūfa); Abū Sulaimān ad-Dārānī and ʿAlī ibn Bakkār (of the people of Damascus); Abū ʿAbdu'llāh al-Khawwāṣ and Abū ʿĀṣim (of the people of ʿAbadān); Ḥabīb Abū Ahmad and Abū Jāʾiz al-Salmānī (of the people of Persia); Mālik ibn Dīnār, Sulaimān eating and drinking becoming unlawful [for someone who is keeping the fast], it is the one that spreads out over the peaks of the mountains; that is the one that makes it unlawful [for someone who is keeping the fast to do anything that would break his fast]."

The two dawns have also been described in astronomical terms by certain learned scholars, endowed by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) with knowledge of the cosmos. These are the definitions they provide:

1. The first dawn *[al-fajr al-awwal]*. This is the manifestation of the dominant force *[sulṭān]* controlling the rays of the sun. When the sun appears from behind the fifth earth, that force allows its light to gleam in the middle of the sky—until it cuts it off—for the brief duration of the first dawn. That gleam of light, which becomes visible in the sky in the final third of the night, is the first dawn. Then the darkness of the night returns, just as it was before, because the sun sinks into the lowest inclining orbit, where it is screened by the sixth earth, with the result that the gleam of light disappears from the sky.
2. The second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]*. This is the breaking of the sun's glow *[shafaq]*, which is the manifestation of its whiteness with an underlying redness. This is its second reddish glow, and the first real display of its power at the end of the night. It is followed by the rising of the sun's disk, which means that the sun has become visible over the surface of the earth of this world—the seventh earth, in other words—and that its rays have burst forth from the lowest celestial sphere. (The lowest sphere is the fringe of the sky.) Its eye had been concealed by the mountains, the oceans, and the regions of high elevation, but now its rays are clearly visible, as they spread out toward the middle of the sky, extending horizontally *[mustaṭīran]* as well as vertically.

The first dawn is described as extending vertically *[mustaṭīlan]*, because it makes only a vertical appearance in the sky, then disappears from view. The second dawn is different, in that it appears across a broad front, embracing the whole horizon and all the regions of the sky. (The sun has two reddish glows *[shafaqatān]* at the time of its setting, as well as two reddish glows at the time of its rising.)

6.

Concerning the time prescribed for the performance of the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*.

On how to determine whether the sun has begun its decline *[zawāl]*,and on how to measure the shadows caused by the sun.

The correct timing *[waqt]* of the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*:

As for the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*, the first moment of the time prescribed for its performance is when the sun has begun to decline from the meridian. The last moment is reached when the length of every shadow has become equal to the height of the corresponding object.

The most meritorious approach is to perform the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]* without delay, except in conditions of extremely intense heat, and only if the sky is overcast, in the case of a worshipper who intends to go out and join the congregation. This qualification is based on the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Put off the midday prayer until the atmosphere gets cooler *[abridū bi'ẓ-ẓuhr]*, for extremely intense heat is caused by the festering pus of Hell *[fayḥ Jahannam]*.

Bilāl[158] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "I gave Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) the call *[adhān]*[159] to the midday prayer, but he said: 'Wait till it gets a bit cooler *[abrid]*!' Then I gave him the call a second time, and again he said: 'Wait till it gets a bit cooler!' Then I gave him the call a third time, and this time he said: 'Wait till it gets a bit cooler—till you can see the afternoon shadow of the hills.' Then he went on to say: 'Extremely intense heat is caused by the festering pus of Hell *[faiḥ Jahannam]*, so whenever the heat becomes insufferably intense, you should all wait until the atmosphere gets cooler [before performing the midday prayer].'"

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[158] Bilāl al-Ḥabashī, an Abyssinian slave who had been ransomed by Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), was the first muezzin *[mu'adhdhin]* appointed by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to summon the Muslim community to the five daily prayers.

[159] For the words of the call to prayer *[adhān]*, see note 303 on p. 225 below.

How to determine whether the sun has begun its decline from the meridian *[zawāl]*:

When the sun has reached the point where it comes to a momentary standstill,[160] we know that its decline is about to begin. As soon as it has in fact declined from the meridian, however slightly, the time prescribed for the midday prayer *[waqt aẓ-ẓuhr]* has arrived.

According to the Prophetic tradition *[hadīth]* [161]

> When the sun has declined by the width of the strap of a sandal *[shirāk]*, that is the beginning of the time prescribed for the midday prayer *[waqt aẓ-ẓuhr]*. Then, when the length of every shadow has become equal to the height of the corresponding object, it is the end of the time prescribed for the midday prayer, and the beginning of the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer *[waqt al-'aṣr]*.

How to measure the length of the shadow caused by the sun:

If you wish to determine these moments exactly, you need to measure the length of the shadow caused by the sun. In order to make the necessary measurements, you should set up some kind of pillar or pole on a piece of open ground, making sure that it is perfectly straight and upright. Then you must draw a line to mark the point where the shadow ends. Then you must watch to see whether the shadow is getting shorter or longer. If you notice that it is getting shorter, you will realize that the sun is not yet in decline. If you notice that it is steady, neither extending itself nor shrinking, the reason can only be that the sun has reached its point of momentary standstill, exactly at the meridian. It is not permissible to perform the ritual prayer [*salāt*] at that point in time.

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[160] This is a reference to the fact that the sun comes to a halt, when it reaches the center of the sky, and interrupts its progress for a brief moment. As Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in Vol. 3, pp. 72–73:

> The expression *ṣāma 'n-nahār* [lit. the daytime has kept fast] may be used at the point of midday in summer, when the sun is at its height, and the shade has almost disappeared. In the words of the anonymous poet:
>
> Until, when the day keeps fast *[ṣāma 'n-nahār]*, having reached the point of noon,
> and gossamer threads *[lu'āb]* appear to fall in the light of the summer sun.

[161] The use of this expression may suggest that the following statement (in the text above) is a paraphrase of the actual words attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in the tradition *[hadīth]* quoted earlier. (See p. 114 above.)

As soon as the shadow starts to grow longer, that is a sure indication of the sun's decline [*zawāl*]. You must therefore measure the increase, and compare it with the height of the object you are using as your standard. When the increase in the length of the shadow coincides exactly with the height of the standard, that is the end of the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt az-zuhr*]. The slightest additional increase will mark the advent of the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-ʿasr*]. This period will last until the shadow has lengthened by another distance equal to the height of the standard, at which point the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-ʿasr*] will have come to its end. The remainder of the afternoon, until just before the setting of the sun, is called the time of dire necessity [*waqt ad-darūra*].[162]

Instead of using a pillar or post, you may use your own stature as your standard of measurement. You will have to mark the spot where your own shadow falls, then, if you see that it is getting shorter, you will know that the sun has not yet begun to decline. If you notice that the shadow is holding steady, will realize that the sun is poised at the meridian. If it starts to grow longer, the decline [*zawāl*] must be under way, [so you will realize that the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt az-zuhr*] has arrived].

When it comes to reckoning whether the length of your shadow is equal to your own stature and height, you need to know that your height is seven times the length of your own foot, not counting the length of the foot you are standing on. You should stand with your face toward the sun, then instruct some other person to mark the farthest point of your shadow with an unmistakable sign. Then you must measure the distance from your heel to that sign. If the distance between the two points is less than seven feet, apart from any shadow already caused by the sun at the moment of its decline, you will know for sure that you are within the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt az-zuhr*], and that the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-ʿasr*] has not yet arrived. But if the shadow has lengthened by more than seven feet, you will recognize the advent of the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-ʿasr*].

[162] In other words, it is a period during which the prayer may still be performed, but only as a last resort, provided that the worshipper can plead the excuse of dire necessity. As the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) explains on p. 139 below in connection with the time prescribed for the late evening prayer [*waqt al-ʿishāʾ al-ākhira*], the period of true merit [*waqt al-faḍīla*] is followed by a similar period of excuse and dire necessity [*waqt al-ʿudhr wa'd-ḍarūra*].

7.

Concerning the differing lengths of the shadows caused by the sun in winter and summer, and in various regions of the world.

In connection with our foregoing discussion, concerning the measurement of shadows by feet, and the setting up of pillars or posts, it is important to note the differing conditions that prevail in winter and in summer. Depending on the season, the shadow caused by the sun will be longer or shorter from one month to the next.

The progressive increase in shadow length takes place in the winter season, because the sun is then in a position diametrically opposite to the object that casts a shadow, since its progress is confined to the fringe of the sky, and it does not ascend into the upper reaches of the atmosphere.

The progressive decrease in shadow length takes place in the summer season, because it is then that the sun rises high into the atmosphere, to shine on terrestrial objects from an overhead position.

During the first phase of its ascent, the sun is rising from the edge of the sky, so it causes a lengthy shadow to be cast by any object facing its emerging disk. The higher it rises, the shorter the shadow becomes, until the sun reaches the end of its ascending journey, at which point it comes to a momentary halt in the middle of the sky, at the meridian or zenith [*kabid as-samā'*]. Then the sun takes off on its "cruise [*sayarān*]," its descending journey toward its eventual setting in the west [*maghrib*], and the shadow immediately starts to grow longer, for this is the point of decline from the meridian [*zawāl*].

Just as it differs from season to season, so does the length of shadow vary from country to country and from town to town. In those areas that are situated directly beneath the center of the celestial sphere [*wasat al-falak*], like Mecca and its surrounding districts, any shadow caused by the sun is very slight indeed, to the point where the sun has no shadow at all. On the other hand, in regions that are remote from the center of the celestial sphere, like Khurāsān and its neighboring districts, the sun produces a very lengthy shadow in summer and winter alike.[161] As far as length of shadow is concerned, summer in such areas is just like winter elsewhere. Even in summer, at the point when the sun declines from the meridian, they may already have as much as one whole foot of shadow.

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[161] The province of Khurāsān, on the borders of Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia, must have seemed very remote and strange—almost "out of this world"—to the medieval inhabitants of Mecca or Baghdād.

Concerning the Qur'ānic recitation appropriate to the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*.

As for the Qur'ānic recitation appropriate to the the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*, Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> The ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]* should include the recitation of the Sūra [that begins with]:
>
> By the sun and its brightness. (91:1) *wa 'sh-shamsi wa ḍuḥā-hā*
>
> —and [the Sūra of] the Bright Forenoon *[Sūrat aḍ-Ḍuḥā]*.[125]

According to one traditional report,[126] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When a worshipper performs the twelve cycles of the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*, he should recite in each cycle *[rak'a]*:
>
> - the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]*—one time only,
> - the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[127]—one time only, and
> - [the Sūra that begins with]:
>
> Say: "He is Allāh, One!" (112:1) *qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad*—three times.
>
> Seventy thousand angels will thereupon descend from every heaven, bearing white sheets of paper and pens made of light, and they will go on recording good deeds in his favor, until the blast is blown on the Trumpet. Then, when the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]* has arrived, the angels will come to him, and each of the angels will bring a fine suit of clothes and a gift. They will stand by his grave, and they will say: "O occupant of the grave, arise, by the permission of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), for you are one of those who are safe and secure *[āminīn]*."

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[125] The Sūra of the Bright Forenoon *[Sūrat aḍ-Ḍuḥā]* is the 93rd Sūra of the Qur'ān. (In some translations, it is entitled "The Sūra of the Morning Hours.")

[126] **Author's note:** The chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report goes back to: 'Urwa ibn Shu'aib—his father—his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[127] Q. 2:255.

- In April *[Nīsān]*: four feet.
- In May *[Ayyār]*: three feet.
- In June *[Ḥazīrān]*: two feet.

This brings us to the summer solstice, the point where the daytime is at its longest, and the night at its shortest.[166] A two-foot shadow—the minimum for the entire year—is already cast at the moment when the sun declines from the meridian. The daytime lasts for fifteen hours, while the night lasts for nine hours. Then:

- In July *[Tammūz]*: three feet.
- In August *[Āb]*: four feet.
- In September *[Aylūl]*: five feet.

This bring us to the autumnal equinox, when the night and the day are exactly equal in duration.[167]

Sufyān ath-Thawrī[168] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"The maximum length of the shadow already cast, at the point when the sun declines from the meridian, is seven feet."

According to a traditional report, it was 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd[169] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

"In the summer season, our performance of the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*, in the company of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), would take place when the shadow was from three feet to five feet in length. In the winter season, it would take place when the shadow was from five feet to six feet in length."

* * *

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[166] According to modern works of reference, the summer solstice (in the northern hemisphere) occurs around June 22.

[167] According to modern works of reference, the autumnal equinox (in the northern hemisphere) occurs on September 22 or 23.

[168] Abū 'Abdi'llāh Sufyān ibn Sa'īd ath-Thawrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was born in Kūfa in A.H. 97/715 C.E. He founded a school of Islamic jurisprudence *[fiqh]* which survived for about two centuries after his death in Basra in A.H. 161/778 C.E.

[169] Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd al-Hudhalī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was one of the earliest and closest Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). A man of lowly antecedents, he became an authority on the recitation and interpretation of the Qur'ān, and an expert on Islamic law and the Prophetic tradition. He died in A.H. 32 or 33.

This tradition *[hadīth]* begins with the definition of the timing of the midday prayer *[salāt az-zuhr]*. The scholars have therefore treated the timing *[waqt]* of that prayer as the first of the [five] appointed times *[mawāqīt]*, on the grounds that it was the first [of the five daily prayers] to be prescribed as an obligatory religious duty.

As we have already explained, however, the dawn prayer *[salāt al-fajr]* was the one performed by Adam (peace be upon him), and he was the first Prophet *[Nabī]*, the first member of the human race to be sent on a mission to the earth. In the most general sense, therefore, the dawn prayer *[salāt al-fajr]* is known to be the first ritual prayer that was ever prescribed as an obligatory religious duty.

On that day, the sun will decline from the meridian when the shadow cast by a human being is seven and a half feet in length. This is the maximum length attained by the meridian shadow.

Thenceforth, with every fourteen days that pass, the length of the shadow will decrease by one foot, until the vernal equinox is reached on the nineteenth day of March *[Ādhār]*.[174] On that day, the sun will decline from the meridian when the shadow cast by a human being is three feet in length.[175] This point marks the sun's entry into the spring season.

As we have mentioned above, the rate of increase or decrease in the length of the shadow is one foot for every thirty-six days in the seasons of spring and summer, and one foot for every fourteen days in the seasons of autumn and winter.

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[174] See note 165 on p. 126 above.

[175] That is to say, three times the length of the actual foot of the individual concerned. (See p. 123 above.)

10.

Concerning yet another view of this matter, suggested by one of our own Shaikhs.

The following tabulation represents the view of this matter preferred by one of our own Shaikhs. For each of the solar months, he lists the length of the shadow cast by a human being: (a) at the beginning of the time prescribed for the midday prayer *[waqt az-zuhr]*, and (b) at the beginning of the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer *[waqt al-'asr]*. The length of the shadow is measured in feet, on the understanding that one foot is equal to one seventh of [the height of] any given individual, standing in an upright posture. It should also be noted that, in each case, the figures apply to the whole of the month concerned.

Month:	Midday	Afternoon
June *[Ḥazīrān]*:	3 ft.	9 ft.
July *[Tammūz]*:	4 ft.	8 ft.
August *[Āb]*:	5 ft.	10 ft.
September *[Aylūl]*:	6 ft.	12 ft.
October *[Tishrīn al-Awwal]*:	7 ft.	13 ft.
November *[Tishrīn al-Ākhir]*:	8 ft.	14 ft.
December *[Kānūn al-Awwal]*:	10 ft.	17 ft.
January *[Kānūn ath-Thānī]*:[176]	9 ft.	15 ft.
February *[Shubāṭ]*:	7 ft.	14 ft.
March *[Ādhār]*:	6 ft.	12 ft.
April *[Nīsān]*:	4 ft.	11 ft.
May *[Ayyār]*:	3 ft.	10 ft.

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[176] *Kānūn ath-Thānī* [January] is also known as *Kānūn al-Ākhir*

These figures represent the distances by which the sun declines from the meridian during each of the months of the year. Allāh knows best, of course, for His knowledge goes beyond the reach of our perception, and transcends the limited scope of our sciences.

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11.

Concerning the permissibility of using less objective methods in order to ascertain whether the sun has declined from the meridian.

In order to determine the moment of the sun's decline from the meridian *[zawāl]*, it is by no means absolutely necessary to apply the methods and definitive calculations described above. They represent only one of several valid approaches to ascertaining the point of decline, and not everyone is in a position to adopt that particular approach. The crux of the matter is simply this: Whenever someone is reasonably persuaded and convinced of the sun's decline from the meridian *[ghalaba 'alā ẓanni-hi wa yaqīn-hi zawālu 'sh-shams]*, it is incumbent upon that person to perform the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*.

In relation to the prescribed times *[auqāt]*, people fall into three distinct categories:

a. Those for whom certainty is a strict obligation *[farḍu-hu 'l-yaqīn]*. If a person belongs within this category, it means that he is familiar with the minutes and the hours, and with the movement of the stars. With this knowledge at his disposal, he is able to determine the exact time with certainty.

b. Those for whom it is a strict obligation either to exercise their independent judgment *[ijtihād]*,[177] by making the necessary calculations on the basis of their own practical experience, or to follow the example *[taqlīd]* set by someone who makes the required effort.

Included in this category are craftsmen who lack objective knowledge of the times of day. If they are to exercise their independent judgment, they must therefore base their calculations on the experience obtained in the practice of their craft. For example, a baker will know from

[177] As a technical term of Islāmic jurisprudence, *ijtihād* means the effort made by a qualified expert to reach an independent judgment on a point of law, through the interpretation and application of the four basic sources or principles *[uṣūl]*, namely the Qur'ān, the Sunna, the consensus *[ijmā']* of the recognized authorities, and deduction by analogy *[qiyās]*. A person qualified to exercise *ijtihād* is called a *mujtahid*.

experience that he normally bakes two or three batches of kneaded dough in the time before noon; or a miller will know that it usually takes him till around noon to grind a bushel *[qafīz]* of grain. He will therefore take advantage of the break before his next round of work, and duly perform the ritual prayer.

Just as it is hard for anyone to ascertain the time on a day when the sky is overcast, due to the sun's invisibility, there may be special circumstances in which a person is prevented from watching the time, or is too busily preoccupied to do so.

People in this category may sometimes have another option, namely, to perform the ritual prayer *[salāt]* in response to the call to prayer *[adhān]*, provided that the call is given by someone who has expert knowledge of the prescribed times, or at least by someone who would not give the call without the permission of such an expert.

c. Those for whom it is a strict obligation to consult their intuitive sense of what is right and proper *[at-taharrī]*, and to delay their performance of the prayer until they feel reasonably sure that the prescribed time has indeed arrived. This applies to anyone who finds himself in an underground situation, and to all those who are confined or imprisoned in places where it is impossible to ascertain the time, whether by external indication, reported information, or the sound of the call to prayer *[adhān]*.[178]

To establish the guiding principle in all of this, let us quote the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Whenever I give you an order, you must carry it out to the best of your ability.

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[178] See note 303 on p. 225 below.

12.

Concerning the subtle and difficult nature of the task of ascertaining the precise moment of the sun's decline from the meridian *[maʿrifat az-zawāl bi't-taḥqīq]*.

It is indeed a subtle and difficult task, to ascertain with precision the moment of the sun's decline from the meridian *[maʿrifat az-zawāl bi't-taḥqīq]*. This is clearly conveyed to us in the tradition *[ḥadīth]*, according to which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once asked Gabriel (peace be upon him): "Has the sun declined from the meridian?" He received the answer: "No..., yes," so he said: "How can that be?" and Gabriel (peace be upon him) explained: "In the time it took for me to say to you: 'No..., yes,' the sun covered a distance of fifty thousand leagues *[farsakh]*[179] in its orbit across the celestial sphere."

It would seem that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asking Gabriel (peace be upon him) about the sun's decline *[zawāl]* with respect to the knowledge *[ʿilm]* of Allāh (Exalted is He). For your own practical purposes, however, you will find the following guidelines sufficient:

If you are facing the *Qibla* [the direction of the Kaʿba],[180] on a day in the summer season, and the sun is over your right eyebrow, it has already declined from the meridian, without a doubt. You should therefore perform the midday prayer *[fa-ṣalli 'ẓ-ẓuhr]*.

If the shadow cast by every object has reached the point where it is equal in length to the height of the corresponding object, you know for sure that the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer *[waqt al-ʿaṣr]* has arrived.

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[179] According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the *farsakh* [parasang, or league] is three miles of the Hāshimī measure, i.e. thirty bow-shots reckoning the bow-shot as four hundred cubits, or sixty bow-shots reckoning the bow-shot as two hundred cubits. (See E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *F-R-S-KH*.)

[180] See note 152 on p. 118 above.

If the sun is over your left eyebrow, again in the summer season, while you are facing the *Qibla*, you must be aware that the sun has not yet declined from the meridian.

If the sun is directly between your eyes, it has reached the point where it comes to a momentary halt in the middle of the sky, at the meridian or zenith [*kabid as-samā'*]. It may actually have begun its decline, if this happens at the beginning of the winter season, when the daytime is growing shorter.

If the winter season has begun, and the sun is over your right eyebrow, it has definitely declined from the meridian. This is true at all times of the year, because, when this happens in the summer season, it marks the beginning of the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt az-zuhr*], and if it happens in the winter season, it marks the end of the time prescribed for the midday prayer.

If the sun is over your left eyebrow, this may also mean that it has already declined from the meridian, on account of the shortening of the daytime in the winter season. It is not possible at the beginning of the summer season, however, on account of the extension that then occurs in the length of the daytime.

If the sun is directly between your eyes, in the winter season, it must have declined from the meridian, without a doubt.

If the sun has moved over to the point where it appears above your right eyebrow, again in the winter season, this marks the end of the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt az-zuhr*].

All of the foregoing information is relevant to the inhabitants of the geographical zone of 'Irāq and Khurāsān,[181] who perform their prayers while facing the Ka'ba in the direction of the Black Corner [*ar-Rukn al-Aswad*][182] and the door of the House [of Allāh]. As for the people of Yemen [*al-Yaman*] and the West [*al-Maghrib*], and those who inhabit the neighboring regions, the opposite holds true in their case, since they perform their prayers while facing toward the Yamānī Corner [*ar-Rukn al-Yamānī*] and the rear part of the Ka'ba. The calculations must differ accordingly.

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[181] See note 163 on p. 125 above.

[182] The Black Corner [*ar-Rukn al-Aswad*], which is sometimes called the Corner of the House [*Rukn al-Bait*], is the angle of the Ka'ba in which the Black Stone [*al-Hajar al-Aswad*] is lodged.

13.

On how to identify the *Qibla*, once you have ascertained the sun's decline from the meridian *[zawāl]*.

Once you have ascertained the sun's decline from the meridian *[zawāl]*, and wish to identify the *Qibla*[183] [direction of the Ka'ba], you must cast your shadow to your left, for then you will be facing toward the *Qibla*.

You will be relieved to know that this can be summed up so neatly, and that it can be learned without laborious effort. If I went on at such great length, in discussing the ascertainment of the sun's decline from the meridian *[zawāl]*, I only did so because it happens to be the most difficult and the most subtle of all the times prescribed for ritual prayer *[awqāt]*.

As for measuring the length of shadow in feet, this practice goes back to the time of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as we know from the traditional report *[khabar]*[184] of Ibn Mas'ūd[185] (may Allāh be well pleased with him). We may conclude that the subject has received a sufficiently thorough explanation in the preceding pages, though we must acknowledge that Allāh knows best.

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[183] See note 152 on p. 118 above.

[184] See note 142 on p. 112 above.

[185] See note 169 on p. 127 above.

14.

Concerning the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer *[waqt al-ʿaṣr]*.

As for the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer *[waqt al-ʿaṣr]*, it begins, as we have mentioned above, as soon as there is the slightest increase in the length of shadow, beyond the point where the shadow is equal in length to the height of the person or object by which it is cast. The end of its prescribed time is reached when the shadow has come to be twice as long as the corresponding object. As we have also mentioned above, the remainder of the afternoon, until just before the setting of the sun, is called the time of dire necessity *[waqt aḍ-ḍarūra]*.[156]

The most meritorious approach is to perform the afternoon prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr]* with the least possible delay.

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[156] See note 162 on p. 123 above.

15.

Concerning the time prescribed for the sunset prayer [*waqt al-maghrib*].

As far the sunset prayer [*salāt al-maghrib*] is concerned, once the sun has set [*gharabat ash-shams*], that is to say, as soon the tip of the sun's eyebrow has sunk out of sight, its prescribed time has arrived.

It actually has two prescribed times, of course, [to mark both the beginning and the end of the period allowed for its performance]. One of these is the setting [*ghurūb*] of the sun, and the other is the final disappearance of the sun's afterglow [*shafaq*]. The latter refers to the lingering redness [*ḥumra*] in the western sky, according to the more authentic of the two traditionally reported doctrines [*aṣaḥḥ ar-riwāyatain*].

◆

16.

Concerning the time prescribed for the late evening prayer *[waqt al-‘ishā’ al-ākhira]*.

As soon as the sun's final reddish afterglow *[shafaq]* has disappeared completely, the beginning of the time prescribed for the late evening prayer *[waqt al-‘ishā’ al-ākhira]* has definitely arrived. Within the whole of the time allowed for its performance, the period of true merit *[waqt al-faḍīla]* lasts until one third of the night has elapsed, according to one of the two traditionally reported doctrines on the subject. According to the other version, it lasts until halfway through the night *[niṣf al-lail]*. The period of true merit *[waqt al-faḍīla]* is then followed by the period of excuse and dire necessity *[waqt al-‘udhr wa 'ḍ-ḍarūra]*,[187] which remains in effect as long as the second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]*[188] has not yet risen into view.

The time prescribed for this prayer has two Arabic names, one of them being *‘atama* [the first third of the night, after the disappearance of the sun's reddish afterglow], while the other is *al-‘ishā’ al-ākhira* [the late evening]. We know this because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The Arabs of the desert *[al-A‘rāb]* have gained the upperhand over you, as far as the name of this particular prayer *[ṣalāt]* of yours is concerned, since *‘atama* is what they call it.

In other words, its proper name was *al-‘ishā’ al-ākhira*, but the Arabs of the desert insisted on calling it *‘atama*, so the townspeople came into line with them in this respect.

The most meritorious approach is to delay its performance until toward the latter part of its prescribed time, which may mean either the

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[187] That is to say, the period of true merit *[waqt al-faḍīla]* is followed by an additional period, during which the prayer may still be performed, as a last resort, provided that the worshipper can plead the excuse of dire necessity. (For a similar period of dire necessity *[waqt aḍ-ḍarūra]*, following the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer *[waqt al-‘aṣr]*, see p. 137 above.)

[188] For precise definitions of the second dawn *[al-fajr ath-thānī]*, which is also known as the true dawn *[al-fajr aṣ-ṣādiq]*, see p. 118 above.

This tradition [*hadith*] begins with the definition of the timing of the midday prayer [*salāt az-zuhr*]. The scholars have therefore treated the timing [*waqt*] of that prayer as the first of the [five] appointed times [*mawāqīt*], on the grounds that it was the first [of the five daily prayers] to be prescribed as an obligatory religious duty.

As we have already explained, however, the dawn prayer [*salāt al-fajr*] was the one performed by Adam (peace be upon him), and he was the first Prophet [*Nabī*], the first member of the human race to be sent on a mission to the earth. In the most general sense, therefore, the dawn prayer [*salāt al-fajr*] is known to be the first ritual prayer that was ever prescribed as an obligatory religious duty.

17.

Concerning the established customary observances *[as-sunan ar-rātiba]* that are regularly performed in conjunction with these five daily prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]*.

As for the established customary observances *[as-sunan ar-rātiba]* that are regularly performed in conjunction with these five obligatory daily prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]*, they consist of thirteen cycles *[rakʿa]* of ritual prayer, distributed as follows:

a. Two cycles of voluntary ritual prayer performed before the obligatory dawn prayer *[rakʿatān qabla 'l-fajr]*.[191]

b. Two cycles of voluntary ritual prayer performed before the obligatory midday prayer *[rakʿatān qabla 'ẓ-ẓuhr]*.[192]

c. Two cycles of voluntary ritual prayer performed after the obligatory midday prayer *[rakʿatān baʿda 'ẓ-ẓuhr]*.

d. Two cycles of voluntary ritual prayer performed after the obligatory sunset prayer *[rakʿatān baʿda 'l-maghrib]*.[193]

e. Two cycles of voluntary ritual prayer performed after the obligatory late evening prayer *[rakʿatān baʿda 'l-ʿishāʾ al-ākhira]*.[194]

f. Three cycles of the odd-numbered ritual prayer called *witr*.[195] In performing this voluntary prayer, the worshipper has two options: If he so wishes, he may perform it with a single salutation *[taslīma]*[196]

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[191] For a detailed account of the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]*, the first of the five obligatory daily prayers (which is also known as *ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ* [the prayer of daybreak]), see pp. 110 and 118–20 above.

[192] For a detailed account of the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*, the second of the five obligatory daily prayers, see pp. 110 and 118–20 above.

[193] For a detailed account of the sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*, the fourth of the five obligatory daily prayers, see pp. 110 and 118–20 above.

[194] For a detailed account of the late evening prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ al-ākhira]*, the last of the five obligatory daily prayers (which is also known as *ṣalāt al-ʿatama* [the prayer of the first third of the night, after the disappearance of the sun's reddish afterglow]), see pp. 110 and 118–20 above.

[195] See note 50 on p. 42 above.

[196] The term *taslīma* [salutation] is applied to the act of turning the head to the right and saying: "*as-salāmu ʿalaikum wa raḥmatu'llāh* [Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh]," then turning the head to the left and repeating these same words.

[at the end of the third cycle], as in the case of the sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*. If he prefers, he may split it into two parts, making one salutation *[taslīma]* after two cycles, and another after the single cycle that concludes the *witr*. There is greater merit in choosing the second of these two options.

In the first of the three [cycles of the *witr* prayer], the worshipper should follow his recitation of the Opening Sūra of the Qur'ān *[al-Fātiḥa]*[197] with the Sūra of the Most High *[Sūrat al-A'lā]*, which reads:

Glorify the Name	*sabbiḥi 'sma*
of your Lord the Most High	*Rabbi-ka 'l-A'lā*
who created, and then shaped,	*alladhī khalaqa fa-sawwā*
and who determined, then guided,	*wa 'lladhī qaddara fa-hadā*
and who brought forth the pasturage,	*wa 'lladhī akhraja 'l-mar'ā*
then turned it	*fa-ja'ala-hu*
into rust-colored stubble.	*ghuthā'an aḥwā*
We shall make you recite	*sa-nuqri'u-ka*
[O Muḥammad]	
so that you shall not forget	*fa-lā tansā*
save that which Allāh wills.	*illā mā shā'a 'llāh:*
He surely knows what is spoken aloud	*inna-hu ya'lamu 'l-jahra*
and that which is kept hidden;	*wa mā yakhfā*
and We shall ease your way	*wa nuyassiru-ka*
unto the state of ease.	*li'l-yusrā.*
Therefore remind,	*fa-dhakkir*
in case the reminder	*in nafa'ati 'dh-*
brings some benefit.	*dhikrā*
He who fears will remember,	*sa-yadhdhakkaru man yakhshā*
but the most wretched will flout it,	*wa yatajannabu 'l-ashqā*
he who will roast in the Great Fire,	*alladhī yaṣla 'n-nāra 'l-kubrā*
in which he then will	*thumma lā yamūtu*
neither die nor live.	*fī-hā wa lā yaḥyā.*
Successful is he who purifies	*qad aflaḥa man tazakkā*
himself, and remembers	*wa dhakara 'sma*
the Name of his Lord,	*Rabbi-hi.*
and then performs the prayer.	*fa-ṣallā*
But you prefer the life	*bal tu'thirūna 'l-ḥayāta 'd-*
of this lower world,	*dunyā*
although the Hereafter is better	*wa 'l-ākhiratu khairun*
and more lasting.	*wa abqā*
Surely this is in the ancient scrolls	*inna hādhā la-fi 's-Ṣuḥufi 'l-ūlā*
the scrolls of Abraham and Moses.	*Ṣuḥufi Ibrāhīma wa Mūsā.*
(87:1–19)	

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[197] The recitation of the Opening Sūra of the Qur'ān *[al-Fātiḥa]* is an essential element *[rukn]* in every performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, which is rendered null and void by its omission.

In the second [cycle of the *witr* prayer], after *al-Fātiḥa*, he should recite the Sūra called "the Unbelievers" *[Sūrat al-Kāfirūn]*, which reads:

Say: "O unbelievers,	*qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn*
I do not worship what you worship,	*lā aʿbudu mā taʿbudūn*
and you are not worshipping	*wa lā antum ʿābidūna*
that which I worship;	*mā aʿbud*
nor shall I worship	*wa lā ana ʿābidum*
what you have worshipped,	*mā ʿabadtum*
neither will you worship	*wa lā antum ʿābidūna*
that which I worship.	*mā aʿbud*
To you your religion,	*la-kum dīnu-kum*
and to me my religion!" (109:1–6)	*wa liya dīn.*

In the third [cycle of the *witr* prayer], again after *al-Fātiḥa*, he should recite the Sūra of Sincere Devotion *[Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ]*, which reads:

Say: "He is Allāh, One!	*qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad*
Allāh, the Everlasting Refuge'	*Allāhu 's-Samad*
He does not beget,	*lam yalid*
nor was He begotten;	*wa lam yūlad*
and there is none	*wa lam yakun la-hu*
comparable unto Him." (112:1–4)	*kufuwan aḥad.*

In the first of the two cycles of the customary dawn prayer *[sunnat al-fajr]*, after *al-Fātiḥa*, the worshipper should recite the Sūra called "the Unbelievers" *[Sūrat al-Kāfirūn]*, then, in the second cycle, again after *al-Fātiḥa*, he should recite the Sūra of Sincere Devotion *[Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ]*. The worshipper is recommended to perform these two cycles of voluntary prayer in his private residence, and only then to go out [to join the congregation in the mosque]. He is also recommended to devote himself to the remembrance of Allāh (Exalted is He), and to refrain from any conversation that is not absolutely necessary, from the time of completing the two voluntary cycles until the moment when he embarks upon the performance of the prayer that is strictly obligatory *[farīḍa]*.

In the two cycles [of customary prayer] after the obligatory sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*, the Qur'ānic recitation should be the same as in the two cycles preceding the obligatory dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]*.

Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

"On more than twenty occasions, I heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) reciting:

'Say: "O unbelievers...," '	*qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn...*

—and:

'Say: "He is Allāh, One!..."'	*qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad...*

—in the course of performing the two [cycles of customary prayer] after the obligatory sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*."

In the case of Ṭāwūs (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), we know from a traditional report that he used to recite, in the first of the two cycles:

The Messenger believes in that	*āmana 'r-Rasūlu*
which has been sent down to him	*bi-mā unzila*
from his Lord,	*ilai-hi*
and so do the believers.	*wa 'l-mu'minūn:*
Each one believes in Allāh	*kullun āmana bi'llāhi*
and His angels	*wa malā'ikati-hi*
and His Books and His Messengers—	*wa kutubi-hi wa rusuli-h:*
we make no distinction between any	*lā nufarriqu baina aḥadin*
of His Messengers—and they say:	*min rusuli-h: wa qālū:*
"We hear, and we obey."	*sami'nā wa aṭa'nā.*
Grant us Your forgiveness, our Lord;	*ghufrāna-ka Rabba-nā*
and unto You	*wa ilai-ka 'l-*
is the homeward journey.	*maṣīr—*
Allāh does not charge any soul	*lā yukallifu 'llāhu nafsan*
except to the extent of its capacity.	*illā wus'a-hā:*
To its credit	*la-hā*
is that which it has earned, and	*mā kasabat wa 'alai-hā*
to its debit is what it has deserved.	*ma 'ktasabat:*
Our Lord, do not take us to task	*Rabbanā lā tu'ākhidh-nā*
if we forget, or miss the mark.	*in nasīnā au akhṭa'nā:*
Our Lord, do not lay upon us	*Rabbanā wa lā taḥmil 'alai-nā*
such a burden	*iṣran ka-mā*
as You laid upon	*ḥamalta-hu 'ala 'lladhīna*
those before us.	*min qabli-nā:*
Our Lord, do not lay upon us	*Rabbanā wa lā tuḥammil-nā*
more than we have	*mā lā ṭāqata*
the strength to bear.	*la-nā bih:*
And pardon us, and forgive us,	*wa 'fu 'an-nā wa 'ghfir la-nā*
and have mercy on us.	*wa 'rḥam-nā:*
You are our Protector, so help us	*Anta Maulā-nā fa-'nṣur-nā*
against the people of the unbelievers.	*'ala 'l-qaumi 'l-kāfirīn*
(2:285–6)	

—and in the second cycle:

Say: "He is Allāh, One!..."	*qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad...*

14.

Concerning the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer *[waqt al-ʿaṣr]*.

As for the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer *[waqt al-ʿaṣr]*, it begins, as we have mentioned above, as soon as there is the slightest increase in the length of shadow, beyond the point where the shadow is equal in length to the height of the person or object by which it is cast. The end of its prescribed time is reached when the shadow has come to be twice as long as the corresponding object. As we have also mentioned above, the remainder of the afternoon, until just before the setting of the sun, is called the time of dire necessity *[waqt aḍ-ḍarūra]*.[186]

The most meritorious approach is to perform the afternoon prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr]* with the least possible delay.

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[186] See note 162 on p. 123 above.

For instance, 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said that [her husband] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to perform the two voluntary cycles after the sunset prayer *[ba'da 'l-maghrib]* in his own apartment. A similar report has come down to us from Umm Ḥabība[200] (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would never perform the two voluntary cycles after the sunset prayer *[ba'da 'l-maghrib]*, except in his own apartment."

Let us give the last word on this subject to Sahl ibn Sa'd as-Sā'idī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who is reported as having said:

"By the time I had attained to manhood, I found myself living in the age of [the Caliph] 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), and I noticed that, as soon as the obligatory sunset prayer had ended with the salutation *[taslīma]*,[201] there would not be one single member of the congregation performing the two—meaning the two voluntary cycles after the sunset prayer *[ar-rak'atain ba'da 'l-maghrib]*—in the mosque *[masjid]*. They would all be jostling toward the door of the mosque, departing in haste to perform the customary prayer in their own homes."

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[200] Like 'Ā'isha, Umm Ḥabība (may Allāh be well pleased with them both) is revered as one of the "Mothers of the Believers *[Ummahāt al-Mu'minīn]*," the wives of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[201] See note 196 on p. 141 above.

18.

Concerning the special qualities of the five daily prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]*.

According to a traditional report transmitted by Abū Salama ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If one of you had a stream flowing by his door, in which he bathed himself five times every day, do you suppose that any trace of his physical dirt would be left behind?

"No!" was the unanimous response, so he went on to say:

> Well, that is just how it is in the case of the five daily prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]*. Allāh (Exalted is He) uses them to wipe away sins.

Abū Thaʿlaba al-Quraẓī is reported as having said: "I heard [the Caliph] ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) say: 'Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> '"They [the sinners] feel the scorching heat, but then, when they perform the prayer of daybreak *[ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ]*, the prayer *[ṣalāt]* washes off whatever sin preceded it. Then they feel the scorching heat again, until they perform the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*, and the prayer *[ṣalāt]* washes off whatever sin preceded it. Then they feel the scorching heat yet again, until the time of the afternoon prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr]* is at hand, so they perform it, and the prayer washes off whatever sin preceded it."

"'The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued in this vein, until he had mentioned each of the five daily prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]*.'"

Al-Ḥārith, the freedman *[maulā]* of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), is reported as having said:

"On one occasion, [the Caliph] ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) had taken his seat, then called for some water and used it to perform his ritual ablution. Then he said: 'I saw Allāh's

Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) perform this ritual ablution of mine *[tawaḍḍa'a wuḍū'ī hādhā]*.'[203]

"Then he went on to say: 'So, if anyone else performs this ritual ablution of mine, then duly proceeds to perform the midday prayer *[ṣalla'ẓ-ẓuhr]*, he will be granted forgiveness for whatever sins he may have committed between that point and the prayer of daybreak *[ṣalāt aṣ-subḥ]*.

"'Then, if he duly proceeds to perform the afternoon prayer *[ṣalla 'l-'aṣr]*, he will be granted forgiveness for whatever sins he may have committed between that point and the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*.

"'Then, if he duly proceeds to perform the sunset prayer *[ṣalla 'l-maghrib]*, he will be granted forgiveness for whatever sins he may have committed between that point and the afternoon prayer *[ṣalāt al-'aṣr]*.

"'Then, if he duly proceeds to perform the late evening prayer *[ṣalla 'l-'ishā' al-ākhira]*, he will be granted forgiveness for whatever sins he may have committed between that point and the sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*. Then maybe he will go to bed and spend his night tossing and turning.

"'Then, if he duly proceeds to perform the daybreak prayer *[ṣalla 'ṣ-ṣubḥ]*, he will be granted forgiveness for whatever sins he may have committed between that point and the late evening prayer *[ṣalāt al-'ishā' al-ākhira]*. For:

Surely the good deeds will	*inna 'l-ḥasanāti*
drive away the evil deeds.	*yudhhibna 's-sayyi'āt.*
(11:114)'	

"His listeners then said to him: 'So, these [five daily prayers] are the "good deeds *[ḥasanāt]*," but what are the "abiding deeds of righteousness *[al-bāqiyātu 'ṣ-ṣāliḥāt]*?"'[204] To this he replied: 'They are the affirmations:

• Glory be to Allāh!	*subḥāna 'llāh!*
• Praise be to Allāh!	*al-ḥamdu li'llāh!*
• There is no god but Allāh!	*lā ilāha illa 'llāh!*
• Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar!*
• There is no power,	*lā ḥawla*
nor is there any strength,	*wa lā quwwata*
except through Allāh,	*illā bi'llāhi 'l-*
the All-High, the Almighty!	*'Aliyyi 'l-'Aẓīm!* '"

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[203] The verb *tawaḍḍa'a* and the noun *wuḍū'* are both derived from the three-consonant root *w–ḍ–'*. The ablution called *wuḍū'* is actually the minor ritual cleansing, as distinguished from *ghusl*, the major ritual cleansing, which requires the washing of the whole body

[204] Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has spoken of "the abiding deeds of righteousness *[al-bāqiyātu 's-ṣāliḥāt]*" in Q. 18:46 and 19:76.

According to a traditional report from Ja'far ibn Muhammad, his father told him that his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once told him that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had said:

> The ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is the means of pleasing the Lord and the angels [*marḍāt ar-Rabb wa 'l-malā'ika*], the exemplary custom of the Prophets [*sunnat al-Anbiyā'*] (may Allāh's blessings be upon them all), the light of spiritual experience [*ma'rifa*] and the root of faith [*īmān*], the response to supplication and the acceptance of good deeds, a blessing upon sustenance, the comfort of physical bodies, a weapon against hostile forces, the means of displeasing the Devil [*Shaiṭān*], an intercessor between the worshipper and the Owner of the Heavens [*Mālik as-Samawāt*], a lamp in his tomb and a cushion beneath his side, his response to Munkar and Nakīr,[204] and a friendly companion to visit with him in his tomb, until the Day of Resurrection [*Yaum al-Qiyāma*].
>
> Then, when the Day of Resurrection has arrived, the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] will be a cooling shade above him, a crown upon his head, a garment upon his body, a guiding light in front of him, a screen between him and the Fire of Hell, the proof in the presence of the Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) that he is one of the true believers [*mu'minīn*], a weight in the Balance [*al-Mīzān*],[205] a passport across the Bridge over Hell [*aṣ-Ṣirāṭ*],[206] and a key to the Garden of Paradise.
>
> This is all because the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is a glorification of the Lord [*tasbīḥ*],[207] a declaration that all praise belongs to Him [*taḥmīd*],[208] a proclamation of His Sanctity [*taqdīs*],[209] an exaltation of His Might and Majesty [*ta'ẓīm*],[210] a recitation of His Book [*qirā'a*],[211] and a personal supplication [*du'ā'*]. The most meritorious of all good deeds is surely the ritual prayer, duly performed at the time prescribed for it [*aṣ-ṣalāt li-waqti-hā*].

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[204] Munkar and Nakīr are the two angels charged with the interrogation of the dead. Their names do not occur in the Qur'ān, but they are mentioned in a saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in which their work is described in some detail.

[205] For a detailed account of the Balance [*Mīzān*], see Vol. 1, pp. 242–46.

[206] For a minutely detailed description of the Bridge over Hell [*aṣ-Ṣirāṭ*], in a traditional account attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), see Vol. 2, p. 251.

[207] The verbal noun *tasbīḥ* is derived from the three-consonant root *s–b–ḥ*, which occurs in the expression "*subḥāna 'llāh* [Glory be to Allāh]!"

[208] The verbal noun *taḥmīd* is derived from the three-consonant root *ḥ–m–d*, which occurs in the expression "*al-ḥamdu li'llāh* [Praise be to Allāh]!" Also derived from this root are Muhammad and Ahmad, the names of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), which mean "Highly Praised" and "Praiseworthy."

[209] The verbal noun *taqdīs* is derived from the three-consonant root *q–d–s*, which conveys the basic idea of "holiness, sanctity." The verb *taqaddasa* is used in the expression "*taqaddasa 'llāh* [Sanctified is Allāh]!" This same root occurs in the words *Maqdis* and *Muqaddas*, which are applied to the Temple of Jerusalem.

[210] The verbal noun *ta'ẓīm* is derived from the three-consonant root *'–ẓ–m*, which occurs in *al-'Aẓīm* [the Almighty, the Sublime], which is one of the Most Beautiful Names of Allāh (Exalted is He).

[211] The word *qirā'a* [reading, recitation] is derived from the same three-consonant root—*q–r–'*—as Qur'ān. In certain contexts, notably that of the ritual prayer, *qirā'a* means specifically "the recitation of the Qur'ān."

Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said: "I once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> 'The five daily prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]* are the supporting pillar of the true religion *['imād ad-dīn]*. Allāh does not accept faith *[īmān]* without the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.'"

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

"A man once asked: 'O Messenger of Allāh, how many ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* has Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) enjoined upon His servants as obligatory religious duties?' When he received the reply: 'Five ritual prayers *[khams ṣalawāt]*,' the man went on to ask: 'And is there anything [obligatory] before them or after them?' So the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told him:

> "'As obligatory religious duties, Allāh has enjoined upon His servants a total of five ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt khams]*. There is nothing [obligatory] before them or after them.'

"The man then swore by Allāh that he would perform all five, neither adding to them nor subtracting from them, whereupon Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: 'If he is true to his oath, he will enter the Garden of Paradise!'"

Tamīm ad-Dārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> "'The first item for which the servant [of the Lord] will be called to account, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, will be his performance of the obligatory ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. If he has carried it out completely, it will be recorded as perfect in his credit column. If he has not carried it out completely, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will say to the angels: "See if you can find any voluntary observances *[taṭawwu']* to My servant's credit, then apply them in order to make up for what he has omitted in this area."'"

Anas ibn Ḥakīm ad-Ḍabī' is reported as having said: "Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "'When you get back home to your family, be sure to let them know that I heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> "'"The first item for which the servant [of the Lord] will be called to account, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, will be his performance of the prescribed ritual prayer *[aṣ-ṣalāt al-maktūba]*. If he has carried it out completely,

> [well and good]. If not, an investigation will be undertaken [by the angels], and if he has any voluntary observances [*taṭawwu‘*] to his credit, they will be applied in order to complete his record of obligatory performance [*farīḍa*]. The same procedure will then be followed when it comes to assessing his achievements in other spheres of duty.'"

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> "'The first item for which the servant [of the Lord] will be called to account [on the Day of Resurrection] will be his performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], and the first obligatory religious duty to be enjoined upon this Community [*Umma*] by Allāh (Exalted is He) was none other than the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].'"

19.
Concerning the practice of going out to the mosque *[masjid]*, the special merit of worshipping in congregation *[jamā'a]*, and the virtue of a humble attitude toward the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

According to a traditional report transmitted by Nāfi', on the authority of Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Between the ritual prayer performed in congregation *[ṣalāt al-jamā'a]* and that performed individually *[al-fadhdh]*, the difference [on the scale of merit] is one of twenty-seven degrees.

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> When the servant [of the Lord] performs his ritual ablution *[tawaḍḍa'a]*, then goes out to join the congregation in the mosque *[masjid]*, for every step he takes, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) records a good deed in his credit column, deletes a bad deed from his debit column, and raises his spiritual status by one degree. The welcome he receives from Allāh (Exalted is He) is just like the joyful welcome accorded to a long-absent relative, when he finally comes home to his family.

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted by Abū 'Uthmān an-Nahdī, on the authority of Salmān [al-Fārisī] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) says: "When someone performs his ritual ablution *[tawaḍḍa'a]* in his own house, and does his ablution really well *[aḥsana 'l-wuḍū']*, then visits Me in one of My houses, he is coming to Me as a guest *[zā'ir]*, and it is a duty *[ḥaqq]* incumbent upon the host *[mazūr]* to offer his guest an honorable and generous reception."[212]

[212] This Divine Saying is a Sacred Tradition *[Ḥadīth Qudsī]*, not a verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān.

According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Sālim ibn 'Abdi'llāh, [the Caliph] 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said:

"Gabriel came to the Prophet (peace be upon them both) and said to him: 'To those who walk to the mosques *[masājid]* on foot, in the darkness of the night, you must convey the good news that they will be granted perfect light on the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*!'"

From a similar traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Abu'd-Dardā' (may Allāh be well pleased with him), we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a person walks to the mosques *[masājid]* on foot, in the darkness of the night, Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant him light on the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*.

It is reported on the authority of Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that he once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> The ritual prayer performed in congregation *[salāt al-jamā'a]* is more meritorious, by twenty-five degrees, than the ritual prayer performed in private *[salāt al-fadhdh]*.

According to a traditional report transmitted by Nāfi', on the authority of Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:[213]

> Between the ritual prayer performed in congregation *[salāt al-jamā'a]* and that performed individually *[al-fadhdh]*, the difference [on the scale of merit] is one of twenty-seven degrees.

From another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), we learn that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> O 'Uthmān ibn Maz'ūn,[214] if someone performs the daybreak prayer as a member of a congregation *[sallā 's-subh fī jamā'a]*, he will be credited with a Pilgrimage *[Hijja]* that has been blessed, and a Visitation *['Umra]* that is worthy of acceptance.[215]

[213] The author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has already quoted this saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) at the beginning of this subsection.

[214] 'Uthmān ibn Maz'ūn should not be confused with the Caliph, 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān, (may Allāh be well pleased with them both). The former was a talented poet, and a staunch supporter of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[215] The term *Hijja* is applied to a specific performance of the *Hajj* [Pilgrimage]. For a full account of the rites of the *Hajj* [Pilgrimage] and the *'Umra* [Visitation, Lesser Pilgrimage], see Vol. 1, pp. 26–52.

> O 'Uthmān, if someone performs the midday prayer as a member of a congregation *[ṣallā 'ẓ-ẓuhr fī jamā'a]*, he will be credited with twenty-five ritual prayers, each and every one of them just like it, and he will be awarded seventy degrees in the Garden of Paradise *[Jannat al-Firdaws]*.
>
> O 'Uthmān, if someone performs the afternoon prayer as a member of a congregation *[ṣallā 'l-'aṣr fī jamā'a]*, then practices the remembrance of Allāh (Exalted is He) until the sun goes down, it will be to his credit as if he had emancipated a band of the offspring of Ishmael *[Ismā'īl]* from slavery, together with twelve thousand others for every man amongst them.
>
> O 'Uthmān, if someone performs the sunset prayer as a member of a congregation *[ṣallā 'l-maghrib fī jamā'a]*, he will be credited with twenty-five ritual prayers, each and every one of them just like it, and he will be awarded seventy degrees in the Garden of Eden *[Jannat 'Adn]*.
>
> O 'Uthmān, if someone performs the late evening prayer as a member of a congregation *[ṣallā 'l-'ishā' al-ākhira fī jamā'a]*, it will be just as if he had kept vigil on the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*.[216]

When a man sets out for the mosque *[masjid]*, he is strongly recommended to approach it with a feeling of dread, a sense of apprehension, and an attitude of humility and submissiveness. He is also recommended to maintain a bearing of calm serenity and solemn dignity. He should persuade himself that he needs to improve his patterns of thought and behavior, by detaching himself from his recent involvement in the conditions and concerns of this lower world. He should set out in a spirit of hope and fear, self-abasement, humility and contrition, free from vain conceit, arrogant pride, boastfulness, and the desire to impress other people and win the admiration of his fellow creatures. He should set out with the intention of turning himself in the direction of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), by making his way to one of those houses of worship of His, which:

Allāh has allowed to be raised up,	*adhina 'llāhu an turfa'a*
and in which [He has allowed]	*wa yudhkara*
His Name to be commemorated;	*fī-hā 'smu-hu*
glorifying Him therein,	*yusabbiḥu la-hu*
in the mornings and the evenings,	*fīhā bi'l-ghuduwwi wa 'l-āṣāl—*
are men whom neither commerce	*rijālun lā tulhī-him tijāratun*
nor trafficking diverts	*wa lā bai'un*
from the remembrance of Allāh.	*'an dhikri 'llāh*
(24:36,37)	

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[216] For a detailed account of the practice of keeping vigil during the nights of the month of Ramaḍān, especially the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*, see Vol. 3, pp. 126–35.

If the worshipper finds, on arriving at the mosque *[masjid]*, that the congregational prayer is already in progress, he must join the congregation in performing whatever remains of the ritual prayer *[mā adraka mina 's-salāti sallā ma'a 'l-jamā'a]*. Then he must make up [separately] for what he has missed. This is in accordance with the tradition *[ḥadīth]* reported on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If one of you arrives when the ritual prayer has already begun *[qad uqīmati 's-salāt]*, he should move forward unobtrusively [and join the ranks of the congregation]. He must perform as much of the congregational prayer as he is in time for, and then make up [separately] for the part that he has missed by arriving late.

In another version of this same tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the wording is:

> He should move forward with a bearing of calm serenity *[sakīna]* and solemn dignity *[waqār]*.

The worshipper must be on his guard against vain conceit, in case it should come to be his motive for extraordinary diligence and unremitting perseverance in the performance of acts of worship *['ibādāt]*, because that would cause him to fall from the approving eye of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). It would remove him from His nearness. It would make him blind to his true spiritual condition. It would deprive him of the light of his faculty of insight, and of the sweetness he used to discover in his worship. It would obscure the pure clarity of his spiritual experience *[ma'rifa]*. It might even result in his work being rejected and shattered, because we are traditionally informed that Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) will not accept any deed from those who give themselves airs, unless and until they repent. According to one traditional account *[ḥadīth]*:

> Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]*, the Bosom Friend of the All-Merciful *[Khalīl ar-Raḥmān]*,[217] (peace be upon him), once devoted a whole night to vigil and worship *[aḥyā lailā]*.[218] Then, when day dawned, he took pride in the fact that he had kept vigil throughout the night. He said: "Good indeed is the Lord, the Lord of Abraham, and good indeed is His servant, Abraham!"

[217] The Prophet Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) is more usually called *Khalīlu'llāh* [the Bosom Friend of Allāh]. The meaning, of course, is essentially the same, since *ar-Raḥmān* [the All-Merciful] is one of the Names of Allāh (Exalted is He).

[218] The noun corresponding to the verb *aḥyā* is *iḥyā'*. In non-religious contexts, the Arabic expression *iḥyā' al-lail* (literally, enlivening the night, or bringing the night to life) means simply "to stay awake throughout the night." In a religious context, it refers to the practice of keeping vigil in order to enliven the night with religious service, worship, adoration and devotion.

> But then, when it was time for his early morning meal, he found that no one would eat with him, although he (may Allāh bless him and give him peace) was fond of having other people eat with him. So he took his meal outside on the street, in the hope that someone passing by might stop and share it with him.
>
> At this point, a pair of angels descended from heaven above. When they came toward him [in human form], Abraham (peace be upon him) invited them to eat breakfast with him. They accepted his invitation, so he said to them: "Come, let us go to this garden over here, for in it there is a fountain of water, so we can enjoy our breakfast beside it."
>
> So they went together into the garden, but only to find that the fountain had dried up, and there was not a drop of water in it. This was a very distressing experience for Abraham (peace be upon him), and he was terribly embarrassed about what he had said, since there was actually no water to be found. But the angels said to him: "O Abraham, offer a supplication to your Lord, and ask Him to restore the water to the fountain."
>
> Abraham (peace be upon him) accepted their advice and made his entreaty to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), but he received no response whatsoever. This troubled him greatly, so he said to the angels: "You two had better appeal to Allāh!" One of them thereupon offered a supplication, and the water returned to the fountain. Then the other angel made his supplication, and the fountain began to spout abundantly. Only then did they let him know that they were angels [in human form]. They explained to him that his vainglorious pride in his night of vigil had caused his supplication to be rejected, so that he received no response to his plea.

If this was how Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) treated His Bosom Friend, Abraham (peace be upon him), how can He be expected to deal with others?

Far from taking pride in his devout observance of religious duties, the servant [of the Lord] must be firmly convinced that all his commitment to worshipful obedience *[tā'a]*, and his zealous dedication to it, can only be attributed to helpful guidance *[tawfīq]* from Allāh, and to His blessing, favor, mercy and grace. He must therefore stand in His presence (Almighty and Glorious is He) with an attitude of reverence, humility and self-abasement, as if he could witness Him directly with his ordinary eyes. As the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> You must worship Allāh as if you could see Him, for, even if you do not see Him, he surely does see you.

According to the Sacred Tradition *[Ḥadīth Qudsī]* that has been transmitted to us, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) told Jesus, the son of Mary *[‘Īsā ’bnu Maryam]* (peace be upon them both), by way of inspiration:

> When you stand in My presence, you must stand there with the attitude of one who is fearful, humble, and reproachful toward his own lower self *[nafs]*, for it is surely deserving of reproach. And if you appeal to Me in supplication, your limbs must be trembling while you offer Me your supplication.

As we also know from traditional sources, Allāh (Exalted is He) conveyed the same message to Moses *[Mūsā]* (peace be upon him), likewise by way of inspiration.

From a report concerning Ibn Sīrīn (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), we learn that whenever he stood up to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, his face would turn ghastly pale, from fear and dread of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

In the case of Muslim ibn Yasār (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), as soon as he had embarked upon the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, he became completely deaf to the sound of a human voice, or to any other sound for that matter, due to intense concentration on the prayer, and from fear of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

‘Āmir ibn ‘Abd Qais once said: "I would prefer to have daggers at odds between my shoulder blades, rather than be thinking of any worldly matter, while I am engaged in performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*."

It was Sa‘d ibn Mu‘ādh (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "It has never once happened, while I was performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, that I talked to myself about any worldly matter, until I got up and left [the place of worship]."

Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said:

"Whenever [‘Abdu’llāh] ibn az-Zubair (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was engaged in performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, he seemed like a very old man, on account of his great humility.

"As for Wahb (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), when he stood up to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, he looked like someone who was catching a glimpse of Hell *[Jahannam]*.

"In the case of ‘Utbat al-Ghulām, while he was engaged in performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, even in the season of winter, the sweat would be pouring from his skin. When people asked him why this was so, he explained: 'It is because of my acute sense of shame in the presence of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).'

"A fire once broke out in the house of Muslim ibn Yasār (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), while he was praying *[yuṣallī]* in one of its rooms. The people of Basra become alarmed, so they dashed out and extinguished the blaze. Muslim himself was quite unaware of the fire, until they had already put it out, and he had finished performing his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. On another occasion, it is said, he was praying in a large congregational mosque *[jāmiʿ]*, when a column of the building collapsed and fell right by his side. This caused a panic among the folk in the adjoining marketplace, but Muslim himself had no idea that it had happened."

From a report concerning ʿAmmār ibn az-Zubair (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), we learn that he was once engaged in performing his ritual prayer *[yuṣallī]*, having placed his sandals on the ground in front of him. He had recently repaired those sandals of his, and his attention wandered to the brand new straps. So, when he had finished his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, he threw his sandals away, and he never wore sandals again, from then until the day he died (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

According to the story that is told about ar-Rabīʿ ibn Khaitham (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), he was once performing the ritual prayer [at night] as an act of voluntary devotion *[yuṣallī tatauwuʿan]*, having tethered in front of him a horse worth twenty thousand dirhams [silver coins]. Along came a thief, who untethered the horse and made off with it. Early the next morning, people came to commiserate with the unfortunate victim, so he told them: "As a matter of fact, I did happen to see the person unhitching it, but I was engaged at the time in something far dearer to me than my horse." Later that same day, lo and behold, the horse came trotting out of nowhere, until it halted right in front of him!

According to a traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once performed the ritual prayer *[sallā]* while wearing a black shawl, in which there was a thread of red fiber. As soon as he had concluded the prayer by pronouncing the final salutation *[sallama]*,[219] he complained: "This thread distracted me from my ritual prayer *[alhā-nī ʿan ṣalātī]*!"

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[219] The verb *sallama* means "he pronounced the *taslīm* [salutation]." In other words, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) concluded his prayer by turning his head to the right and saying: "*as-salāmu ʿalaikum wa raḥmatu'llāh* [Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh]," then turning his head to the left and repeating these same words.

Allāh (Exalted is He) has extolled the virtue of those who are humble in their attitude toward the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, for He has told us (Exalted is He):

Successful indeed are the believers,	*qad aflaḥa 'l-mu'minūn*
who are humble	*alladhīna hum*
in their prayers. (23:1,2)	*fī ṣalāti-him khāshi'ūn*.

As explained by az-Zuhrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), this attitude of humility signifies a person's calm and complete commitment to his ritual prayer *[sukūn al-mar'i fī ṣalāti-hi]*.

When a person is in this state, it has been said, he knows neither who is to his right, nor who is to his left, during the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, on account of his total preoccupation with the prayer itself. It is for this very reason that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> In the ritual prayer, there must truly be a focus of concentration *[inna fi 's-ṣalāti la-shughlan]*.

⁂

20.

Concerning the importance of performing the five daily prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]* with all due care and attention to detail, and on what we know from traditional sources about the punishment awaiting those who neglect to perform them correctly.

According to a report transmitted by al-Aʿmash, on the authority of Shaqīq ibn Salama, it was related by Ibn Masʿūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If the servant [of the Lord] performs the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* during the first part of the time prescribed for it, his prayer will rise up into the sky above, and it will have a light to guide it all the way to the Heavenly Throne *[ʿArsh]*. It will seek forgiveness on behalf of its owner until the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, and it will say: "May Allāh take good care of you, as you took good care of me!"
>
> If the servant [of the Lord] performs the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, but not at the time prescribed for it, his prayer will rise up toward the sky, but without a light to to guide it. So, when it reaches a certain point in the air above, it will flap about like an article of clothing, or a tattered rag, and he will feel it slapping him in the face. Then it will say: "May Allāh neglect you, as you neglected me!"

According to the tradition *[hadīth]* narrated by ʿUbāda ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs the ritual ablution *[tawaḍḍaʾa]*, and does the ablution *[wuḍūʾ]* with the utmost care and attention to detail, then proceeds to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and does every part of it perfectly, whether it be the bowing posture *[rukūʿ]*, the prostration *[sujūd]*, or the Qurʾānic recitation *[qirāʾa]*, the prayer *[ṣalāt]* will say to him: "May Allāh take good care of you, as you took good care of me!"
>
> Then it will be raised up into the sky above, accompanied by a radiance and a guiding light. The gates of heaven will therefore be opened to let it pass through

> so that it can travel all the way to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and then intercede with Him on behalf of its owner.
>
> If, on the other hand, the worshipper is negligent in his performance of the bowing posture *[rukū']*, the prostration *[sujūd]*, or the Qur'ānic recitation *[qirā'a]*, the prayer *[salāt]* will say to him: "May Allāh neglect you, as you neglected me!" Then it will be raised up in darkness toward heaven, so the gates of heaven will be shut to keep it out. It will then flap about in the air like a tattered piece of clothing, and its owner will feel it slapping him in the face.

Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having said:

"I once asked Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace): 'Which deeds are the most meritorious?' and he replied: 'The ritual prayers performed at the times prescribed for them *[as-salawāt li-waqti-hinna]*, the dutiful treatment of one's parents *[birr al-wālidain]*,[220] and the sacred struggle waged in the cause of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) *[al-jihād fī sabīli 'llāh ('azza wa jall)]*.'"[221]

According to a traditional report from Ibrāhīm ibn Abī Mahdhūra, the muezzin *[mu'adhdhin]*, his father told him that his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once told him that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had said:

> The first part of the time prescribed [for the ritual prayer] is Allāh's good pleasure *[Riḍwānu'llāh]*. The middle section of the prescribed time is Allāh's mercy *[Raḥmatu'llāh]*. The last part of the prescribed time is Allāh's pardon *['Afwu'llāh]*.[222]

Allāh (Exalted is He) has warned us:

So woe to those who pray,	*fa-wailun li'l-muṣallīn:*
but are heedless	*alladhīna hum 'an*
of their prayers,	*ṣalāti-him sāhūn:*
and to those who make a show,	*alladhīna hum yurā'ūn,*
yet withhold the smallest charity.	*wa yamna'ūna 'l-mā'ūn*
(107:4,5)	

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[220] For a detailed account of filial piety *[birr]*, see Vol. 1, pp. 96–99.

[221] The Islāmic term *jihād* [sacred struggle or holy war] is all too frequently misunderstood, especially but not only by non-Muslims. Sometimes, alas, its meaning is willfully misrepresented—by polemicists hostile to Islām, as well as by misguided zealots within the Islāmic Community itself. Fortunately for us, the works of Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) contain many valuable explanations of the true significance of the term *jihād*. (See, for instance, Vol. 2, pp. 44–45.)

[222] This is reminiscent of the well-known saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) concerning the month of Ramaḍān:

> It is a month the beginning of which is a mercy, the middle of which is a forgiveness, and the last part of which is a deliverance from the Fire of Hell.

Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was commenting on these words, when he said: "By Allāh, it is not that they abandon their prayers altogether, but rather that they postpone them beyond the times prescribed for their performance."

Saʿd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "I asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

So woe to those who pray,	*fa-wailun li'l-muṣallīn*
but are heedless	*alladhīna hum ʿan*
of their prayers.	*ṣalāti-him sāhūn.*

—and he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

"'They are those who postpone the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* beyond the time prescribed for its performance.'"

Al-Barāʾ ibn ʿĀzib al-Awsī al-Anṣārī[223] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said, when commenting on the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

So now there has succeeded them	*fa-khalafa-hum min baʿdi-him*
a later generation, who have wasted	*khalfun aḍāʿu 's-ṣalāta*
the prayer and followed	*wa 'ttabaʿu 'sh-*
the desires of the flesh.	*shahawāti*
So they will meet with temptation.	*fa-saufa yalqauna ghayyā.*
(19:59)	

—"'Temptation *[Ghayy]*' is the name of a valley in Hell *[Jahannam]*."

Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was also commenting on these words, when he said: "The only person to enter it will be someone who wastes the times prescribed for his performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*."

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was speaking about the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* one day, and he said:

> For someone who observes it [i.e., the ritual prayer] with all due care, it will be a guiding light, a proof [of righteousness], and a means of salvation on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*. But for someone who fails to observe it with all due care, it will not be a guiding light, and it will be neither a proof [of

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[223] Al-Barāʾ ibn ʿĀzib al-Awsī al-Anṣārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was a Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and a devoted follower of ʿAlī (may Allāh ennoble his countenance). He died in A.H. 71 or 72.

> righteousness] nor a means of salvation from the Fire of Hell. On the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*, he will be in the company of Qārūn, Pharaoh, Hāmān[224] and Ubayy ibn Khalaf.[225]

According to a traditional report transmitted by al-Ḥarth, on the authority of the Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Mu'minīn]*, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone treats his ritual prayer *[salāt]* with disrespect, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will subject that person to fifteen different punishments, six of them before death, three at the time of death, three in the grave, and three when he emerges from the grave [at the Resurrection].
>
> As for the six punishments to be inflicted on him before death, they are the following:
>
> 1. He will be deprived of his reputation as one of the righteous *[sāliḥīn]*.
> 2. He will be deprived of the blessed quality *[baraka]* of life.
> 3. He will be deprived of the blessed quality *[baraka]* of sustenance.
> 4. He will receive no credit whatsoever for any deeds of goodness, until he perfects his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.
> 5. His supplication *[du'ā']* will not be answered.
> 6. No plea on his behalf will be included in the supplication of the righteous *[du'ā' aṣ-ṣāliḥīn]*.
>
> As for the three punishments to be inflicted on him at the time of death, they are the following:
>
> 1. He will die so thirsty that, even if seven oceans were poured into his throat, his thirst could not be quenched.
> 2. He will die suddenly and without warning.
> 3. The weight of all the iron in this world, and of all its wood and stones, will be heaped upon his neck and shoulders.
>
> As for the three punishments to be inflicted on him in the grave, they are the following:
>
> 1. His grave will be too narrow and cramped for him to lie in comfort.
> 2. His grave will be dark and gloomy place for him.
> 3. He will become incapable of articulate speech.
>
> Finally, as for the three punishments to be inflicted on him when he emerges from the grave [at the Resurrection], they are the following:
>
> 1. When he meets Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), he will find that He is angry with him.
> 2. When he is called to account, his reckoning will be very harsh and severe.
> 3. He will be banished from the presence of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and cast into the Fire of Hell, unless Allāh pardons him.

[224] Qārūn (who is called Korah in the Hebrew scriptures) and Pharaoh and Hāmān (Pharaoh's prime minister) are mentioned together in the Qur'ān (40:23,24).

[225] Ubayy ibn Khalaf was a treacherous enemy of the Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace). According to some of the traditional commentators, he is referred to in Q. 25:27.

21.

Concerning the tremendous importance and the enormous significance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) commanded His Messenger Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. In many Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]*, Allāh first of all revealed his Prophetic mission *[awḥā bi'n-Nubuwwa]*, then his duty to perform and establish the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, before any other good practice *['amal]*, and before any other obligatory religious duty *[farīḍa]*. For instance, consider His words (Exalted is He):

Recite what has been revealed	*utlu mā ūḥiya ilai-ka*
to you of the Book,	*mina 'l-kitābi*
and establish the ritual prayer.	*wa aqimi 'ṣ-ṣalāh.*
(29:45)	

To this He then added (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The ritual prayer helps to prevent	*inna 'ṣ-ṣalāta tanhā*
indecency and reprehensible	*'ani 'l-faḥshā'i*
behavior. (29:45)	*wa 'l-munkar.*

Allāh (Glorious and Exalted is He) also said [to His Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)]:

And instruct your family to pray,	*wa 'mur ahla-ka bi'ṣ-ṣalāti*
and be patient in it.	*wa 'ṣṭabir 'alai-hā:*
We ask of you no provision;	*lā nas'alu-ka rizqā:*
We provide for you. (20:132)	*naḥnu narzuqu-k.*

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has also addressed all the believers *[mu'minīn]*, commanding them to turn to patience *[ṣabr]* and the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, for help with all their efforts to serve Him through acts of worshipful obedience *[ṭā'āt]*, for He has said:

O all you who believe, seek help	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanu 'sta'īnu*
in patience and prayer, surely Allāh	*bi'ṣ-ṣabri wa 'ṣ-ṣalāh*
is with those who are patient.	
	inna 'llāha ma'a 'ṣ-ṣābirīn.

He has also said (Exalted is He):

And We appointed them to be leaders	*wa ja'alnā-hum a'immatan*
guiding by Our command,	*yahdūna bi-amri-nā*
and We revealed to them	*wa awḥainā ilai-him*
the doing of good deeds,	*fi'la 'l-khairāti*
and the performance of the prayer,	*wa iqāma 'ṣ-ṣalāti*
and the payment of the alms-due,	*wa ītā'a 'z-zakāh*
and Us they served. (21:73)	*wa kānū la-nā 'ābidīn.*

Here he has mentioned all good deeds in general, they being all acts of worshipful obedience *[ṭā'āt]*, together with the avoidance of all acts of sinful disobedience *[ma'āṣī]*. Then He has singled out the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* for special mention, and enjoined it upon them in particular.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) bequeathed the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* to his Community, at the point of his departure from this world, for he said:

> Allāh, Allāh, Allāh! In [your dutiful performance of] the ritual prayer, and in [your treatment of] what your right hands possess *[fi 's-salāti wa fī-mā malakat aimānu-kum]*.[226]

This was his final bequest (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and indeed, we are told in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* that this was the last bequest of every Prophet *[Nabī]* to his Community *[Umma]*, and his final testament to them at the point of his departure from this world.

The ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* was thus the first obligatory religious duty *[farīḍa]* to be made incumbent upon the Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and upon his Community *[Umma]*, and the dutiful performance thereof was the last injunction bequeathed by him to his Community. It will be the final element to be taken away from Islām, and the first item about which the servant [of the Lord] will be questioned on the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*, when he is called to account for his religious practice. It is the supporting pillar *['amūd]* of Islām, and once it has gone, there will no longer be either any such thing as religion *[dīn]* or any such thing as Islām. According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The first element of your religion *[dīn]* that you lose will be fidelity *[amāna]*, and the last element of it that you lose will be the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. The time will come when only good-for-nothing types will still be performing the ritual prayer *[la-yuṣalliyanna aqwāmun lā khalāqa la-hum]*.

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[226] The Qur'ānic expression "what your right hands possess *[mā malakat aimānu-kum]*" means "your slaves."

According to the doctrine of our Imām, Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal][227] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), a person who abstains from the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* should be condemned as an unbeliever *[yukaffar]*, if he abstains from it deliberately, denying its obligatory status *[jāḥidan li-wujūbi-hā]*, in which case he is subject to the penalty of death. On this point there is no difference of opinion within the Ḥanbalī school of Islāmic jurisprudence *[madhhab]*.

As for the case where a person abstains from the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* out of careless neglect and laziness, although he does maintain his belief in its obligatory status, he must be summoned to perform it within a certain time. Then, if he does not perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* before the time allowed for it has expired, he should be condemned as an unbeliever *[yukaffar]*, and he should be put to death by the sword for his unbelief *[kufr]*.

In each of the two cases described above, the execution should be carried out three days after the guilty individual has been called upon to repent [and has refused to do so], as in the essentially similar case of the apostate *[murtadd]*. The offender's property should then be confiscated as *fai'* [booty obtained without fighting], and deposited in the public treasury *[bait al-māl]* of the Muslims. No funeral prayer should be performed over him *[lā yuṣallā 'alai-hi]*, nor should he be buried in any of the cemeteries in which Muslims are interred.

According to one account of his doctrine, however, our Imām, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), maintained that the death sentence should not be imposed, in the case of careless neglect, unless and until the offender has failed to perform three [consecutive] ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*, and there is not enough time to spare before the fourth becomes due. He should then be put to death in the execution of a penalty specifically prescribed by the sacred law *[ḥadd]*,[228] as in the case of a respectably married man who has been convicted of unlawful sexual intercourse *[az-zānī al-muḥsan]*.[229] His legal status *[ḥukm]* should be that of the Muslim dead, which means that his Muslim heirs *[waratha]* are entitled to inherit his estate.[230]

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[227] See note 7 on p. 7 above.

[228] The specific punishments prescribed by Islāmic law *[ḥudūd*, plural of *ḥadd]*, and the offenses for which they are prescribed, are as follows: (1) For *zinā* in the sense of adultery: death by stoning *[rajm]*. (2) For *zinā* in the sense of fornication: one hundred lashes. (3) For *qadhf* [falsely accusing a married person of adultery]: eighty lashes. (4) For apostasy *[ridda]*: death. (5) For drinking intoxicating beverages *[shurb]*: eighty lashes. (6) For theft *[sariqa]*: amputation of the right hand. (7) For highway robbery *[qaṭ' aṭ-ṭarīq]*: (a) amputation of hands and feet (for robbery only) or (b) death by the sword or crucifixion (for robbery with murder).

According to the doctrine of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the offender should not be put to death. Instead, he should be held in prison until he performs the ritual prayer *[yuṣallī]*. That is to say, he must either repent, or languish in prison until he dies.

According to the doctrine of Imām ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the offender should be put to death by the sword, in the execution of a penalty specifically prescribed by the sacred law *[ḥadd]*, and should not be treated as an unbeliever *[lā yukaffar]*.

We have already presented the evidence that points to this offender's unbelief *[kufr]*, since it is contained within the Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]* and Prophetic traditions *[akhbār]* cited above. For the purpose of further substantiating that evidence, let us conclude this subsection by adding the following citations:

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> To close the gap between a man on the one side, and unbelief *[kufr]* and associating partners with Allāh *[shirk]* on the other, all it takes is the abandonment of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn Zaid, who passed it on from his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Between us [the believers] and them [the unbelievers] lies the abandonment of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. If a person ceases to observe it, he is thereby guilty of unbelief *[kafara]*.

According to a traditional report from Ja'far ibn Muhammad, who transmitted it on the authority of his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once noticed that a man, during the performance of his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, was bobbing his head, with the kind of pecking motion made by crows, so he said:

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[229] Before a respectably married man *[muḥsan]* can be convicted of unlawful sexual intercourse *[zinā]*, Islāmic law requires his accuser to produce four male witnesses of impeccable character, each of whom must be prepared to testify that he had actually seen "the pen in the pen-holder." Failing such testimony, the person making the accusation is himself subject to a penalty of eighty lashes.

[230] In other words, according to this version of the Ḥanbalī doctrine, this offender should be punished as a guilty Muslim, not as an unbeliever.

> If this creature were to die [at this moment], he would die beyond the pale of the religion *[dīn]* of Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

According to a traditional report from ʿAtiyya al-ʿAwfī, who transmitted it on the authority of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If a man abandons his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* deliberately, his name will be inscribed on the gate of the Fire of Hell, in the list of those who are doomed to enter it.

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Oh yes indeed, if someone forgets about the prayer of the first third of the night *[ṣalāt al-ʿatama]*, and lies down to sleep without having performed it, the angels will say to him: "May your eyes neither sleep nor rest! May Allāh keep you in suspense between the Garden of Paradise and the Fire of Hell, as you have kept us in suspense!"

◆

22.

Concerning forty-five bad habits that should be outlawed from the performance of the obligatory ritual prayer *[ṣalāt al-farīḍa]*.

According to a traditional report, transmitted on the authority of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the learned scholars *['ulamā']* among the Companions *[Aṣḥāb]* of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to maintain that forty-five habits are reprehensible, and should be outlawed from the performance of the obligatory ritual prayer *[ṣalāt al-farīḍa]*, namely:

1. Grunting *[tanaḥnuḥ]* with deliberate intent.
2. Fidgeting *[tashāghul]* with deliberate intent.
3. Sneezing *[ta'āṭus]* with deliberate intent.
4. Raising one's head and gazing up toward the sky.

In this case, the reason for disapproval can best be explained by citing the following traditional report:

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to turn his gaze toward the sky above, but then he received the Qur'ānic revelation:

Successful indeed are the believers,	*qad aflaḥa 'l-mu'minūn:*
who are humble	*alladhīna hum fī*
in their prayers. (23:1,2)	*ṣalāti-him khāshi'ūn.*

—so Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) kept his head bowed down *[ṭa'ṭa'a ra'sa-hu]*."

This became the basis for the recommendation that a man should not extend his gaze beyond the edge of his prayer mat *[muṣallā]*.

5. Pressing the flesh beneath the chin against the upper part of the chest *[ilṣāq al-ḥanak bi'ṣ-ṣadr]*.
6. Inspecting one's clothes in search of lice and fleas *[faly ath-thawb]*.
7. Wearily stretching one's limbs *[tamaṭṭī]*.
8. Heaving a deep sigh *[tanaffus as-su'adā']*.

9. Shutting one's eyes *[taghmīḍ al-'ainain]*.
10. Turning and glancing around during the prayer *[al-iltifāt fi 'ṣ-ṣalāt]*.

According to a traditional report, 'Utba ibn 'Āmir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) referred to this when he said, in commenting on the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Those who are constant in their prayer. (70:23)	*alladhīna hum 'alā* *ṣalāti-him dā'imūn*.

—"While they are performing the prayer, they turn neither to the right nor to the left."

'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: "I once asked Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about the case of a man who turns and glances around during the ritual prayer *[ṣalat]*, and he replied:

> "'That is nothing but a crooked trick, by which the Devil *[ash-Shaiṭān]* contrives to steal from the prayer performed by My servant.'"

It is said that Ṭalha (viz., the son of Musrif) once came to visit 'Abd al-Jabbār ibn Wā'il. He found the latter involved with a group of people, so he whispered something to him, and took his leave. 'Abd al-Jabbār then said to his companions: "Do you know what he said? He said: 'When I saw you yesterday, I noticed that you were turning and glancing around, while you were performing the ritual prayer *[wa anta tuṣallī]*.'"

From the following tradition *[ḥadīth]*, we learn that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When the servant [of the Lord] begins the ritual prayer *[fataḥa 'ṣ-ṣalāt]*, Allāh confronts him with His face, and He does not turn it away, unless the servant is the one who turns aside, or glances to right and left.

To quote another tradition *[ḥadīth]*:

> As long as the servant [of the Lord] is constant in the performance of his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, he possesses three characteristics, namely: (1) Righteousness *[birr]* is steadily showering down upon him, from the clouds in the sky onto the parting of the hair on his head. (2) Angels are flying to and fro, between a spot next to his feet and the clouds in the sky. (3) An angelic herald is crying: "If the person at prayer *[al-muṣallī]* only knew with Whom he is intimately conversing *[yunājī]*, he would not move away *[ma 'ntaqal]*.

That is to say, he would not turn around and leave.

The habit of turning and glancing around *[iltifāt]* is very reprehensible indeed. It has even been said that it cuts off the prayer *[ṣalāt]* completely. It certainly indicates a serious lack of respect for the prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and for its rules of conduct *[ādāb]*.

11. Adopting the canine squatting posture known as *iqʿāʾ*,[231] when in the sitting position *[quʿūd]* during [the final stage of] the ritual prayer.[232]

12. Refusing to follow the leader of the prayer *[imām]*.

13. Spreading the forearms wide, while in the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*.

14. Placing the chest on the thighs, while in the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*.

15. Pressing the armpits close to the sides of the body, while in the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*.

The worshipper must keep a space between his armpits and the sides of his body, and not squeeze the former close against the latter. We know this from the traditional report concerning the example set by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in which it is stated:

"If a little lamb had tried to pass beneath his arms, when he was performing the act of prostration *[idhā sajada]*, it would have been able to get through."

This was due to the fact that he went to great lengths in raising his elbows away from the sides of his body, as we are told in another tradition *[ḥadīth]*:

"When Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was performing the act of prostration *[idhā sajada]*, he used to keep his upper arms well apart from the sides of his body."

16. Keeping the fingers spread apart, while in the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*, when they should actually be kept close together.

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[231] As Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in Vol. 1, p. 353:

> Subject to disapproval during the ritual prayer is the squatting posture known as *iqʿāʾ*, which means that a person stretches the upper sides of his feet out on the ground and sits on his heels, or that he sits with both his buttocks on the ground while keeping both his feet erect. In the words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):
>
> > It is a way of squatting that is like the squatting posture of the dog, it is forbidden to adopt it.

[232] It is while in the sitting position *[quʿūd]* that the worshipper concludes his performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, by pronouncing the greetings *[taḥiyyāt]*, the testimony *[tashahhud]*, and the salutation *[taslīma]*.

17. Placing the hands short of the knees, while in the posture of bowing *[rukū']*.

18. Planting one foot on top of the other.

19. Keeping either foot dangling off the ground.

20. Allowing one's waist-wrapper *[izār]* or trouser pants *[sarāwīl]* to hang loosely suspended.[233]

21. Picking one's teeth *[takhlīl]*.

22. Licking one's lips *[talammuẓ]*.

23. Swallowing food amounting to a grain or a couple of grains.

24. Belching up undigested food, and then swallowing it down again.

25. Expelling saliva with the tongue, while in the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*.

26. Blowing wind, while in the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*.

27. Arranging pebbles [on the ground in front of you].

28. Stepping sideways.

29. Raising your voice above that of the person sitting next to you, when pronouncing the testimony *[tashahhud]*.[234]

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[233] According to a traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The Muslim's mode of wearing the *izār* [waist-wrapper] is to have it reaching the middle of the shank. There is no offense and no sin with respect to what is between that point and the ankles, but if anything is lower than the ankles, it is in the Fire of Hell. If anyone trails his *izār* out of vain conceit, Allāh (Exalted is He) will pay no attention to him. (See Vol. 1 p. 352.)

[234] The testimony *[tashahhud]* is pronounced after two cycles of prayer *[rak'atain]* and, in a prayer consisting of more than two cycles, in the final stage of the last cycle. While in the sitting position *[qu'ūd]*, the worshipper recites:

Greetings, prayers and good deeds	*at-taḥiyyātu li'llāhi wa 'ṣ-ṣalawātu*
are due to Allāh. Peace be upon you,	*wa 't-ṭayyibāt—as-salāmu 'alai-ka*
O Prophet, and the mercy of Allāh	*ayyuha 'n-nabiyyu wa raḥmatu'llāhi*
and His blessings! Peace be on us,	*wa barakātuh—as-salāmu 'alai-nā*
and on all the righteous servants of Allāh.	*wa 'alā 'ibādi 'llāhi 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn*

Then, while raising the index finger of the right hand, and pointing it to emphasize the affirmation of Divine Oneness, the worshipper continues:

I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh,	*ashhadu an lā ilāha illa 'llāh—*
and I bear witness that Muhammad	*wa ashhadu anna Muḥammadan*
is His servant and His Messenger.	*'abdu-hu wa rasūluh.*

Such is the wording preferred by Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them). There are slight differences in the version adopted by followers of the school *[madhhab]* of Imām ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them), who recite:

Blessed greetings	*at-taḥiyyātu 'l-mubārakātu*
and good prayers are due to Allāh.	*wa 'ṣ-ṣalawātu 't-ṭayyibātu li'llāh—*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alai-ka*
O Prophet, and the mercy of Allāh	*ayyuha 'n-nabiyyu wa raḥmatu'llāhi*
and His blessings! Peace be on us,	*wa barakātuh—as-salāmu 'alai-nā*
and on all the righteous servants of Allāh.	*wa 'alā 'ibādi 'llāhi 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn*
I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh.	*ashhadu an lā ilāha illa 'llāh—*
And I bear witness that Muhammad	*wa ashhadu anna Muḥammadan*
is the Messenger of Allāh.	*rasūlu 'llāh.*

30. Recognizing the identity of the person to your right, and that of the person to your left.
31. Nodding and winking *[īmā']*.
32. Making pointed gestures *[ishāra]*.
33. Swallowing vomit *[jashā']*, or anything that emerges from the throat.
34. Deliberate coughing *[isti'āl]*.
35. Blowing one's nose *[tamakhkhut]*.
36. Spitting *[tabazzuq]*.
37. Paying attention to clothes.
38. Rubbing the dust from one's brow, before leaving [at the end of the prayer].
39. Arranging pebbles more than one single time.
40. Dusting the spot where the forehead will be placed in the act of prostration *[sujūd]*.
41. Inserting the supplication *[du'ā']* after the testimony *[tashahhud]*, if you are acting as a prayer leader *[imām]*.
42. Sitting in the prayer-niche *[miḥrāb]*, after the final salutation *[taslīm]*, but before the prayer leader *[imām]* has shifted from his place and moved over to his left.
43. Knotting the fingers with the hand during the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.
44. Fiddling with one's beard.
45. Fiddling with one's gown.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> Allāh pays no attention to the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* performed by a man whose heart is not in it, as well as his body.

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once noticed a man fiddling with his beard, so he said:

> If only this man's heart would be humbly submissive, his physical limbs and organs would also be humbly submissive.

Al-Ḥasan [al-Basrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once noticed that a man was playing with the pebbles [on the ground in front of him], and that he was saying as he did so: "O Allāh, marry me to one of those maidens of Paradise with such lovely eyes *[al-ḥūr al-ʿīn]*!"[235] So al-Ḥasan said: "It must be hard for the Matchmaker to take your marriage proposal seriously, since you offer it while playing a silly game!"

According to ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn ʿAbdi'llāh, [his father] ʿAbdu'llāh [ibn Masʿūd] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said:

"If people will insist on raising their eyes toward the sky above, the outcome may well be that their eyesight does not come back to them!"

That is to say, in the course of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

It was al-Awzāʿī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Although two men are both engaged in the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, the difference between them is as great as the difference between heaven and earth. One of them is dedicated to Allāh (Exalted is He) with his heart, while the other is heedless and inattentive *[lāh wa sāh]*."

From one authentic traditional report *[khabar]*, we learn that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The worshipper *[muṣallī]* will be rewarded for half of his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, provided that he remembers [what he is doing] for one tenth of it.

That is to say, provided that he is consciously aware of it, and that his heart is present in it.

According to another tradition *[ḥadīth]*, he also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> [For the performance of one prayer] a worshipper *[muṣallī]* may be credited with four hundred ritual prayers *[ṣalāt]*, another worshipper may be credited with two hundred ritual prayers, another worshipper may be credited with one hundred and fifty ritual prayers, and yet another worshipper may be credited with seventy ritual prayers.
>
> One ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* may be equal in value to fifty ritual prayers; another ritual prayer may be equal in value to twenty-seven ritual prayers, another ritual prayer may be equal in value to ten ritual prayers, and yet another ritual prayer may have the value of just one single ritual prayer *[ṣalāt wāḥida]*
>
> As for the worshipper who is credited with four hundred ritual prayers *[ṣalāt]*, he is the one who performs the prayer *[yuṣallī]* at Mecca, in the Sacred House *[al-Bait al-Ḥarām]*, together with the prayer leader *[imām]*, as a member of the congregation, without having missed the initial declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[at-takbīrat al-ūlā]*.[236]

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[235] See note 9 on p. 9 above.

[236] This initial declaration is often called the consecratory declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīrat al-iḥrām]*. It is the affirmation "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great']," which is pronounced as an act of consecration *[iḥrām]* at the beginning of the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

As for the worshipper who is credited with two hundred ritual prayers *[ṣalāt]*, he is the prayer leader *[imām]*, the one who leads the people in prayer *[ya'ummu 'n-nās]*, but only after he has made himself thoroughly familiar with all the rules that govern the correct performance of the ritual prayer *[aḥkām aṣ-ṣalāt]*

As for the worshipper who is credited with one hundred and fifty ritual prayers *[ṣalāt]*, he is the muezzin *[mu'adhdhin]*, meaning someone who gives the call to prayer *[adhān]*.

As for the worshipper who is credited with seventy ritual prayers *[ṣalāt]*, he is the one who brushes his teeth *[yastāku]*[217] and performs his ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* correctly in every detail, then performs the ritual prayer in the large congregational mosque, as a member of the congregation *[yuṣallī fi 'l-jāmi' fi 'l-jamā'a]*.

As for the worshipper who is credited with fifty ritual prayers *[ṣalāt]*, he is the man who performs the ritual prayer in the large congregational mosque, together with the prayer leader, as a member of the congregation *[yuṣallī fi 'l-jāmi' ma'a 'l-imām fi 'l-jamā'a]*, even though he may have missed the consecratory declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīrat al-iḥrām]*.

As for the worshipper who is credited with twenty-seven ritual prayers *[ṣalāt]*, he is the man who performs his ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* correctly in every detail, then performs the ritual prayer in a small mosque *[masjid]*, as a member of the congregation, and without without having missed the consecratory declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīrat al-iḥrām]*.

As for the worshipper who is credited with ten ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*, he is the man who joins the congregation *[jamā'a]*, although he arrives after the consecratory declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīrat al-iḥrām]* has already been pronounced [by the prayer leader].

As for the worshipper who is credited with one single ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, he is the one who performs the prayer *[yuṣallī]* by himself, not as a member of a congregation.

As for the worshipper who is not credited with any ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* at all, he is the one who keeps bobbing his head like a rooster, and does not properly perform the acts of bowing *[rukū']* and prostration *[sujūd]*. This is the person whose ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* will be draped in the air like a tattered rag, so that its owner will feel it slapping him in the face. He will be told: "May Allāh not take care of you, as you have failed to take care of your ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*!"

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[217] The verb *yastāku* is derived from the same three-consonant root—*s-w-k*—as the noun *siwāk*, which denotes a small stick, softened at the tip by chewing or beating to form a kind of toothbrush.

23.

Concerning the intention *[niyya]* that must be formulated by every worshipper *[muṣallī]* before he begins his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. A detailed account of the movements, postures and utterances that constitute the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

It is incumbent upon every worshipper *[muṣallī]* to formulate the intention *[niyya]*,[238] before proceeding to perform his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

He should picture the Ka'ba, the Sacred House *[al-Bait al-Ḥarām]*, in front of him, and keep his eyes fixed steadily upon it, as we have already explained in the early part of this book.[239]

He should be absolutely convinced *[yatayaqqan]* that he is standing in the presence of Allāh (Exalted is He), and he should not doubt that he is holding himself erect in the sight of Allāh, so that He is really seeing him. This certitude is fully justified, because Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Put your trust in the All-Glorious,	*wa tawakkal 'ala 'l-'Azīzi 'r-*
the All-Compassionate,	*Raḥīm*
who sees you when	*alladhī yarā-ka*
you stand and [who sees]	*ḥīna taqūm*
your bowing down	*wa taqalluba-ka*
among those who prostrate	*fi 's-sājidīn.*
themselves. (26:217–9)	

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[238] At the very beginning of his famous *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Imām al-Bukhārī has prefaced his vast compilation of authentic Prophetic traditions *[aḥādīth]* with the saying of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Actions derive their value from the intentions [on the strength of which they are performed], and every man is credited with what he actually intended *[innama 'l-a'mālu bi-'n-niyyāti wa innamā li-kulli 'mri'in bi-mā nawā]*

[239] See Vol. 1, p. 10, where the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained:

> As for facing the Qibla, this means facing the actual Ka'ba if one is in Mecca or any place in its vicinity. If one is at a distance from it, however, it means facing in its direction, [as nearly as this can be ascertained] by the exercise of judgment *[ijtihād]* and by making the effort to deduce it from all available evidence, such as that provided by the stars, the sun, the winds, etc.

It is also confirmed by the words of the Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> You must worship Allāh as if you could see Him, for, even if you do not see Him, he surely does see you.

When he formulates his intention *[yanwī]* to perform the obligatory ritual prayer *[aṣ-ṣalāt al-farīḍa]*, it is more appropriate [though not absolutely essential] for the worshipper to state specifically whether it is to be performed as a prompt fulfillment *[adā']* [i.e., within the prescribed time], or as an overdue fulfillment *[qaḍā']* [i.e., to make up for his having failed to perform it during the prescribed time].[240]

The worshipper should then raise his hands to the lobes of his ears, or to a position level with his shoulders. (We have given a detailed description of this in the early part of this book.)[241] As to whether he should keep his fingers close together, or whether he should spread them apart, there are two conflicting traditional accounts [of the Ḥanbalī doctrine on this point].

When he raises his hands, and proclaims the Supreme Greatness of Allāh by saying "*Allāhu Akbar!*" it is as if the worshipper is removing the veil between him and Allāh (Exalted is He). He has now arrived at the place where it is not permissible to turn and glance around, and where no distraction is allowed, because he must realize that he is in the sight of One who sees his every movement, and who knows what is churning in his lower self *[nafs]*, as well as all that is concealed within his innermost being *[sirr]* and his heart *[qalb]*.

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[240] The verb *yanwī* [he intends, he is intending to...], like the corresponding noun *niyya* [intention], is derived from the three-consonant root n—w—y. The basic form of the verb is *nawā* [he has intended, he has made it his intention to...]. The form *nawaitu* [I have intended, I have made it my intention to...] is used by the worshipper when he formulates his intention in Arabic.

[241] Thus, a typical formulation of the intention *[niyya]* to perform an obligatory prayer, within the prescribed time, would be:

I have made it my intention	*nawaitu*
to perform the obligatory sunset prayer,	*uṣallī farḍa 'l-maghrib—*
[consisting of] three cycles,	*thalātha raka'ātin*
within the prescribed time,	*adā'an*
for the sake of Allāh (Exalted is He)	*li'llāhi ta'ālā*

If the same prayer is to be performed, but after the prescribed time has elapsed, the word *qaḍā'an* should be substituted in place of *adā'an*.

[241] See Vol. 1, p. 15, where Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained:

> This means that one's hands are brought up close to the shoulders, the thumbs are held beside the lobes of the ears, and the tips of the fingers next to upper parts of the ears. Then the hands are lowered again.

The worshipper must therefore fix his gaze on the spot where he will shortly place his forehead in the act of prostration *[sujūd]*. He must not turn and glance to right and left, nor raise his head toward the sky above, and when he says:

"Glory be to You, O Allāh,	*subḥāna-ka 'llāhumma*
and praise be to You!	*wa bi-ḥamdi-ka*
Blessed is Your Name,	*wa tabāraka 'smu-ka*
and Exalted is Your Majesty.	*wa taʿālā jaddu-ka*
There is no god other than You."	*wa lā ilāha ghairu-k*

—he must be aware that he is addressing One who is hearing him, attending to him, and watching him, and from Whom nothing is hidden, not even the position of a single hair, nor the slightest movement made by any limb or organ of his body.

The same must hold true when he says [in his recitation of *al-Fātiḥa*, the Opening Sūra of the Qur'ān]:

You alone do we worship,	*iyyā-ka naʿbudu*
and of You alone do we seek help.	*wa iyyā-ka nastaʿīn—*
Guide us in the straight path. (1:4,5)	*ihdina 's-sirāta 'l-mustaqīm.*

—for he must grasp the meaning of what he is saying, and realize to Whom he is addressing this recitation.

At the same time, the worshipper must not forget to maintain an attitude of humility, and to be constantly on his guard against fits of absentmindedness, which could make him lose track of the stage he has reached in the performance of his prayer.

In his recitation of *al-Fātiḥa*, he must be careful to observe the eleven instances where an intensified pronunciation *[tashdīd]*[242] is required,[243] namely:

1,2. **–*ll*–** and **–*bb*–** in the first verse *[āya]*:

al-ḥamdu li'LLāhi	Praise be to Allāh,
raBBi 'l-ʿālamīn.	Lord of All the Worlds,

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[242] As a term of Arabic grammar, *tashdīd* denotes the doubling of a consonant, the occurrence of which is indicated (in some texts, especially that of the Qur'ān) by a special superscript mark. The intensified pronunciation of doubled consonants comes naturally to the native speakers of certain languages, notably Italian, but not to many others, including those whose mother tongue is English!

[243] The recitation of *al-Fātiḥa* is preceded by the invocation *[basmala]*: "*Bismi 'llāhi 'r-Raḥmāni 'r-Raḥīm* [In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate]." This is not counted, however, as one of its verses *[āyāt]*, the first of which is therefore

Praise be to Allāh, Lord of All the Worlds.	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-ʿālamīn*

3,4. – **r-r** – twice in the second verse [*āya*]:

aR-Rahmāni 'R-Rahīm.	the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate,

5. – **d-d** – in the third verse [*āya*]:

māliki yaumi 'D-Dīn.	Master of the Day of Reckoning.

6,7. – **yy** – twice in the fourth verse [*āya*]:

iYYā-ka na'budu	You alone do we worship,
wa iYYā-ka nasta'īn.	and of You alone do we seek help.

8. – **ṣ-ṣ** – in the fifth verse [*āya*]:

ihdina 'Ṣ-Ṣirāṭa 'l-mustaqīm.	Guide us in the straight path,

9. – **ll** – in the sixth verse [*āya*]:

ṣirāṭa 'LLadhīna an'amta 'alai-him.	the path of those whom You have blessed,

10,11. – **ḍ–ḍ** – and – **ll** – in the seventh and final verse [*āya*]:

ghairi 'l-maghdūbi 'alai-him	not of those who earn Your wrath,
wa la 'Ḍ-ḌāLLīn.	nor of those who go astray.

The worshipper must also be very careful to avoid any mispronunciation or grammatical mistake [*laḥn*] that would alter the meaning, because the recitation of *al-Fātiḥa* is an obligatory requirement [*farīḍa*]. It is a basic essential [*rukn*],[244] by the omission of which the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is rendered null and void.

In all of this, the worshipper should feel as if he is standing on the Narrow Bridge [*Ṣirāṭ*], with the Garden of Paradise and its blissful attributes to his right, and the Fire of Hell and its terrible contents to his left. He should regard himself as making an application, by offering his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], for what Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has promised, which is the reward of the Garden of Paradise, provided that his prayer [*ṣalāt*] meets all the standards of validity. He should also have the feeling that he is presenting it in order to obtain immunity from Allāh's threat, which is the torment of the Fire of Hell. All of this should be infused with a sense of certainty from his heart, and a present awareness on the part of his conscious understanding.

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[244] As explained by Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) in an earlier Chapter of the present work:

> The ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] has some elements that are basic essentials [*arkān*, plural of *rukn*], some that are necessities [*wājibāt*], others that are recommended practices [*masnūnāt*], and yet others that are formal refinements [*hai'āt*]. (See Vol. 1, pp. 13–16.)

Furthermore, the worshipper should be firmly convinced that he is performing the prayer as a consignor [*yuṣallī ṣalāt mūdi'*], that his consignment will undoubtedly be delivered to Allāh (Exalted is He) for His review, and that the only credit he gets for it will be whatever, in the sight of Allāh, he is entitled to receive.

Next, after he has completed his recitation of *al-Fātiḥa*, the worshipper should go on to recite as many complete Sūras of the Qur'ān as he can easily manage.[245] It is better to recite Sūras from beginning to end, rather than their final or middle sections.

He should listen carefully to what he is reciting, and try to grasp the meaning of the words he is uttering and pronouncing. Likewise, if he is being led [*ma'mūm*], he should listen carefully to the recitation of the prayer leader [*imām*] and try to understand its meaning. He should take note of the exhortations and admonitions it contains, and resolve to carry out its commandments and comply with its prohibitions. His attention to these points should be maintained until the end of the Sūra is reached.

Having completed the Qur'ānic recitation, the worshipper must stand still and keep silent, long enough to catch his breath, before he proceeds to adopt the bowing posture [*qabla an yarka'a*].[246] He must not combine his Qur'ānic recitation uninterruptedly with the affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness that precedes the adoption of the bowing posture [*takbīrat ar-rukū'*].

Then, after this brief pause for breath, the worshipper must say:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar!*

—while raising his hands to the lobes of his ears, or to a position

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[245] In the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Therefore recite of the Qur'ān that which is easy for you. (73:20)	*fa-'qra'ū mā tayassara mina 'l-Qur'ān*

[246] The basic verb *raka'a* (of which *yarka'a* is a subjunctive form) is derived from the same three-consonant root <r-k-'> as the noun *rukū'* [bowing, the bowing posture]. The term *rak'a* [an act of bowing] which is also derived from this root, has acquired an extended meaning, since it is generally used to denote the whole series of movements and postures—including the *rukū'*—that constitute one cycle of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. (The dual and plural forms, corresponding to the singular form *rak'a*, are *rak'atān/-ain* and *raka'āt*, respectively.)

level with his shoulders. (We have given a detailed description of this in the early part of this book.)[247]

As soon as the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*[248] has been accomplished, the worshipper must lower his hands. Then he must bend down from his upright stance *[qiyām]* in order to perform the act of bowing *[rukū']*.

The palms of his hands must now be cupped over his knees, while his fingers are slightly separated. He should support his weight by leaning on the full length of his arms [lit., on his upper arms and his forearms]. He must keep his back straight, neither raising his head, nor tilting it so low that it causes him to lose his balance.

According to one traditional account:

> When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed the act of bowing *[raka'a]*, if there had been a drop *[qaṭra]* of water on his back, it would not have moved from its place.

In a slightly different version, the wording is:

> When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed the act of bowing *[raka'a]*, if there had been a glass *[qadaḥ]* of water on his back, it would not have moved from its place.

That was because he kept his back so perfectly straight and level (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

While he is holding this posture, the worshipper must say, three times:

> Glory to my Lord, the Almighty! *Subḥāna Rabbiya 'l-'Aẓīm*

A threefold repetition is actually the minimum of perfection, for, as al-Ḥasan al-Basrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "The most complete glorification *[tasbīḥ]* is seven repetitions, the average is five, and the minimum is three."

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[247] See note 241 on p. 177 above.

[248] In this instance, the verbal noun *takbīr* is used without the termination *-a/-at*, which is added when a single instance of this affirmation is specified, e.g., *takbīra wāḥida* [one affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness], or when the term is grammatically linked to a qualifying noun, e.g., *takbīrat ar-rukū'* [the-affirmation-of-Allāh's-Supreme-Greatness of-the-bowing-posture] and *takbīrat al-iḥrām* [the-affirmation-of-Allāh's-Supreme-Greatness-of-the-initial-consecration].

The worshipper must then raise his head [and his hands as before], saying *[musammi'an]*:[249]

May Allāh hear and accept	*sami'a 'llāhu*
the praise of one who praises Him!	*li-man ḥamidah.*

Then, having resumed an upright posture, he must stand calmly composed *[yatma'innu]*, allowing his hands to hang freely by his sides.[250]

Next, the worshipper must sink down into the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*. He must place his knees on the ground first of all, then his hands, then his forehead and his nose. He must settle himself firmly on the ground, and maintain a state of calm composure *[yatma'innu]* in his prostration *[sujūd]*. He must align himself so that he is pointing toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba] with every member and part of his body.

From the following tradition *[ḥadīth]*, we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> I have been commanded to perform the act of prostration *[sujūd]* by resting on seven bones.[251]

In the words of another tradition *[ḥadīth]*:

> The servant [of the Lord] is supposed to prostrate himself *[yasjudu]* by resting on seven members of his body, so if he leaves any one of those members out of the act, that member will curse him.

In his posture of prostration *[sujūd]*, the worshipper should be neatly compact, not sprawled out over the ground. Far from spreading his forearms wide, he must place his fingers on the ground in the same position, relative to his ears or his shoulders, as the one recommended when the hands are raised in the upright posture *[qiyām]*, in conjunction

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[249] In the Arabic text, the participle *musammi'an* is sufficient, all by itself, to signify: "saying: '*sami'a 'llāhu li-man ḥamidah* [May Allāh hear and accept the praise of one who praises Him!]'" (Like the verb *sami'a*, it is derived from the three-consonant root *s–m–'*.)

[250] At this point, as Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has mentioned in Vol. 1, p. 14, it is necessary—though not absolutely essential—for the worshipper to utter a declaration of praise *[taḥmīd]*, by saying:

Our Lord, and to You be the praise!	*Rabba-nā wa la-ka 'l-ḥamd.*

The worshipper is also recommended, as a customary practice, to add the words:

Enough [praise] to fill the heavens and the earth,	*mil'a 's-samāwāti wa mil'a 'l-arḍ*
and to fill anything beyond them, as You wish.	*wa mil'a mā shi'ta min shai'in ba'd.*

[251] That is to say: (1) the skull bone in the forehead, (2,3) the bones in the two hands, (4,5) the two kneecaps, and (6,7) the bones in the two feet.

with the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*. He must not place his hands in line with top of his head.

He must keep his fingers close together, and point them toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba]. As we have previously explained,[252] he must keep his upper arms well clear of the sides of his body, his thighs from touching the calves of his legs, and his stomach from coming in contact with the ground.

While he is in the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*, the worshipper must say:

Glory to my Lord, the Most High!	*Subḥāna Rabbiya 'l-A'lā*

He should utter this glorification three times, as in the posture of bowing *[rukū']*.

Then he must raise his head, saying *[mukabbiran]*:[253]

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar!*

He must now sit on his left leg, while placing his right leg so that the right foot is in an upright position [i.e., with the heel raised], and so that his toes are pointing toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba]. While sitting in this posture, he must say:

My Lord, forgive me!	*Rabbi 'ghfir lī*

He should say this three times, while glancing at his breast.

Next, he must prostrate himself *[yasjudu]* a second time, in the same manner as before. Then he must raise his head from the ground, saying *[mukabbiran]*:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar!*

Then he must raise his hands from the ground, and then his knees, relying on his knees to lift his weight. As he rises to stand on the soles of his feet, he should not put one foot ahead of the other, for that is considered reprehensible. It has even been said that it cuts off the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and there is a traditional report to that effect, transmitted on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

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[252] See the list of forty-five bad habits, on pp. 169–73 above.

[253] In the Arabic text, the participle *mukabbiran* is sufficient, all by itself, to signify: "saying: 'Allāhu Akbar [Allāh is Supremely Great']." Like the superlative adjective *akbar*, the verb *kabbara*, and the verbal noun *takbīr*, it is derived from the three-consonant root *k–b–r*.

The worshipper must now perform the second cycle *[rak'a]* in the same manner as the first, until [after the second prostration] he adopts a sitting posture, in order to perform the first testimony *[at-tashahhud al-awwal]*. He must sit on his left leg, while placing his right leg so that the right foot is in an upright position [i.e., with the heel raised], and so that his toes are pointing toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba]. He must place his left hand on his left thigh, and his right hand on his right thigh.

While pointing with the finger next to the thumb, i.e., the index finger *[sabbāba]* [of his right hand], he should join the thumb *[ibhām]* and the middle finger *[wusṭā]* to form a circle, and hold the little finger *[khinṣir]* and the ring finger *[binṣir]* in the grip of his hand. He must keep a watchful eye on his finger from the beginning of his testimony *[tashahhud]* to the end, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> When one of you is in the sitting posture, in the course of performing the ritual prayer *[salāt]*, he must not fiddle with anything, for he is engaged in intimate converse with his Lord *[yunājī Rabba-hu]*. He must place his left hand on his left thigh, and his right hand on his right thigh, then focus his heart and his eyes on his finger, for it can serve as a swatter to whisk away the Devil *[midhabba li'sh-Shaiṭān]*.

The worshipper must now perform the testimony *[tashahhud]*, by saying:

Greetings, prayers and good deeds are due to Allāh.	*at-taḥiyyātu li'llāhi wa 's-salawātu* *wa 't-ṭayyibāt*—
Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allāh and His blessings!	*as-salāmu 'alai-ka ayyuha 'n-nabiyyu* *wa raḥmatu'llāhi* *wa barakātuh*—
Peace be on us, and on all the righteous servants of Allāh.	*as-salāmu 'alai-nā* *wa 'alā* *'ibādi 'llāhi 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn*.
I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger.	*ashhadu an* *lā ilāha illa 'llāh*— *wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan* *'abdu-hu wa rasūluh*

Next, the worshipper must stand up,[254] saying *[mukabbiran]*:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar*.

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[254] That is to say, in order to perform the third cycle *[rak'a]*.

He must recite *al-Fātiḥa* only, with no additional Qurʾānic recitation, and then go on to perform the acts of bowing [*rukūʿ*] and prostration [*sujūd*], in the same manner as before.

The worshipper must then perform the fourth cycle [*rakʿa*] in the same manner as the third [i.e., reciting *al-Fātiḥa* only]. Then he must adopt the sitting posture in order to perform the testimony [*tashahhud*], which he must carry out in the manner we have described above. This time, however, when he reaches the words:

His servant and His Messenger.	*ʿabdu-hu wa rasūluh.*

—he must go on to say:

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,	*Allāhumma ṣalli ʿalā Muḥammadin*
and the family of Muḥammad,	*wa ʿalā āli Muḥammadin*
as You have blessed Abraham!	*ka-mā ṣallaita ʿalā Ibrāhīm*
Surely You deserve	*inna-ka*
to be praised and extolled!	*Ḥamīdun Majīd.*
And bestow Your grace	*wa bārik*
upon Muḥammad, and upon	*ʿalā Muḥammadin*
the family of Muḥammad,	*wa ʿalā āli Muḥammadin*
as You have bestowed Your grace	*ka-mā bārakta*
upon Abraham!	*ʿalā Ibrāhīm.*
Surely You deserve	*inna-ka*
to be praised and extolled!	*Ḥamīdun Majīd.*

According to another account of the doctrine of our Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal], the mention of Abraham [*Ibrāhīm*] should be followed by a reference to his family, so the worshipper must say:

as You have blessed Abraham,	*ka-mā ṣallaita ʿalā Ibrāhīma*
and the family of Abraham.	*wa ʿalā āli Ibrāhīm.*

—and:

as You have bestowed Your grace	*ka-mā bārakta*
upon Abraham,	*ʿalā Ibrāhīm.*
and the upon family of Abraham.	*wa ʿalā āli Ibrāhīm*

At this point, which marks the conclusion of the testimony [*tashahhud*], the worshipper is recommended to seek refuge from four perils. He should therefore say:

O Allāh, I take refuge with You	*Allāhumma innī aʿūdhu bi-ka*
from the torment of Hell,	*min ʿadhābi jahannam*
and from the torment of the grave,	*wa min ʿadhābi 'l-qabr.*

and from the mischief of the False Messiah, and from the mischief of life and death.	*wa min fitnati 'l-* *masīḥi 'd-dajjāl:* *wa min fitnati 'l-maḥyā* *wa 'l-mamāt.*

He should then offer the following supplications:

O Allāh, I beg You to grant me all that is good, both what I know of it and that which I do not know,	*Allāhumma innī as'alu-ka 'l-khaira* *kulla-hu mā 'alimtu min-hu* *wa mā lam a'lam.*
and I take refuge with You from all that is evil, both what I know of it and that which I do not know.	*wa a'ūdhu bi-ka mina 'sh-sharri* *kulli-hi mā 'alimtu min-hu* *wa mā lam a'lam*
O Allāh, I beg You to grant me the goodness of that which Your righteous servants have asked of You,	*Allāhumma innī as'alu-ka* *min khairi mā sa'ala-ka* *'ibādu-ka 's-sāliḥūn*
and I take refuge with You from the evil of that from which Your righteous servants have sought refuge with You.	*wa a'ūdhu bi-ka* *min sharri* *ma 'sta'ādha bi-ka minhu* *'ibādu-ka 's-ṣāliḥūn.*
O Allāh, I beg You to grant me the Garden of Paradise, and whatever brings one close to it, by word and by deed.	*Allāhumma innī* *as'alu-ka 'l-jannata wa mā* *qarraba ilai-hā* *min qaulin wa 'amal.*
Our Lord, give us in this world good, and good in the hereafter, and guard us against the torment of the Fire [of Hell]! (2:201)	*Rabba-nā āti-nā* *fi 'd-dunyā ḥasanatan* *wa fi 'l-ākhirati ḥasanatan* *wa qinā* *'adhāba 'n-nār.*
Our Lord, forgive us our sins, and grant us remission for our evil deeds, and let us end our earthly lives in the company of the righteous.	*Rabba-nā fa-'ghfir* *la-nā dhunūba-nā* *wa kaffir 'an-nā sayyi'āti-nā* *wa tawaffa-nā* *ma'a 'l-abrār.*
Our Lord, give us that which You have promised us through Your Messengers, and do not put us to shame on the Day of Resurrection. Surely You will not fail to keep the tryst! (3:194)	*Rabba-nā wa āti-nā* *mā wa'adta-nā* *'alā Rusuli-ka* *wa lā tukhzi-nā* *yauma 'l-qiyāmah:* *inna-ka* *lā tukhlifu 'l-mī'ād.*

If the worshipper wishes to add further supplications to these, it is permissible for him to do so, unless he is acting as a prayer leader *[imām]*, in which case it would make the proceedings unduly lengthy for those who are following his lead *[ma'mūmīn]*. For one who is leading others in prayer, brevity is the recommended practice *[mustaḥabb]*, out of consideration for their feelings, and because there may be someone amongst them who has a pressing need to attend to.

The worshipper must then conclude the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* by performing the salutation *[taslīma]*,[255] after which he should offer supplications for his own sake, for the sake of his parents, and on behalf of all the Muslims.

At every stage in all of this, the worshipper must be timidly apprehensive about its ultimate outcome, wondering how his prayer may be received in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He), the One who summons us to it, the One who commands us to perform it, the One who rewards us for it [if it is acceptable], and the One who punishes us for it, if it is done badly. So, when he finally emerges from the process, he should undertake a conscious review of his performance. Then, if he can honestly give it a clearance and a clean bill of health, he must offer grateful praise to Allāh (Exalted is He), since He is the One who made him capable of such an achievement. If, on the other hand, he finds it marred by deficiency and imperfection, he must repent to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) and seek Allāh's forgiveness. He must prepare himself to do better, and make a serious effort to be more careful in future.

There is a clear indication to prove that a ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* has been accepted, and an equally clear indication to prove that it has been rejected. The sure sign of its acceptance is that it has been effective in deterring and preventing its owner from indulging in immoral behavior and reprehensible conduct, while encouraging him to do better, renewing his intention to strive after righteousness, increasing his acts of worshipful obedience, his charitable deeds, his eagerness for spiritual rewards, his resistance to bad influences, and his disapproval of sinful acts of disobedience and misconduct. For, as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

The ritual prayer helps to prevent	*inna 's-salāta tanhā*
indecency and reprehensible behavior.	*'ani 'l-faḥshā'i wa 'l-munkar.*
The remembrance of Allāh is greater,	*wa la-dhikru 'llāhi akbar*
and Allāh knows the things you do.	*wa 'llāhu ya'lamu mā taṣna'ūn.*
(29:45)	

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[255] In other words, he must turn his head to the right and say:

Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh.	*as-salāmu 'alaikum wa raḥmatu'llāh*

—then turn his head to the left and repeat these same words.

level with his shoulders. (We have given a detailed description of this in the early part of this book.)[247]

As soon as the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*[248] has been accomplished, the worshipper must lower his hands. Then he must bend down from his upright stance *[qiyām]* in order to perform the act of bowing *[rukū']*.

The palms of his hands must now be cupped over his knees, while his fingers are slightly separated. He should support his weight by leaning on the full length of his arms [lit., on his upper arms and his forearms]. He must keep his back straight, neither raising his head, nor tilting it so low that it causes him to lose his balance.

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> When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed the act of bowing *[raka'a]*, if there had been a drop *[qaṭra]* of water on his back, it would not have moved from its place.

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> When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed the act of bowing *[raka'a]*, if there had been a glass *[qadaḥ]* of water on his back, it would not have moved from its place.

That was because he kept his back so perfectly straight and level (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

While he is holding this posture, the worshipper must say, three times:

> Glory to my Lord, the Almighty! *Subḥāna Rabbiya 'l-'Aẓīm*

A threefold repetition is actually the minimum of perfection, for, as al-Ḥasan al-Basrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "The most complete glorification *[tasbīḥ]* is seven repetitions, the average is five, and the minimum is three."

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[247] See note 241 on p. 177 above.

[248] In this instance, the verbal noun *takbīr* is used without the termination -a/-at, which is added when a single instance of this affirmation is specified, e.g., *takbīra wāḥida* [one affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness], or when the term is grammatically linked to a qualifying noun, e.g., *takbīrat ar-rukū'* [the-affirmation-of-Allāh's-Supreme-Greatness of-the-bowing-posture] and *takbīrat al-iḥrām* [the-affirmation-of-Allāh's-Supreme-Greatness-of-the-initial-consecration].

24.
Concerning the qualifications and responsibilities of the prayer leader [*imām*].

It is not appropriate for a man to act as a prayer leader [*imām*] unless or until he possesses all the attributes we are about to mention, namely:

1. He should not be keen to put himself forward, as long as he can find someone sufficiently qualified to spare him from having to do so, and on no account should he put himself forward in the presence of someone better qualified than he.

This is most important, because, as we know from the tradition [*ḥadīth*], the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If a man leads [*amma*] the people in prayer, when there is someone better qualified in the congregation behind him, they will suffer constant ignominy.

[The Caliph] ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said:

"That I should charge to the battlefront and get my head cut off, without incurring any sin thereby, would be far better than putting myself forward to lead a congregation that included Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth [*aṣ-Ṣiddīq*], (may Allāh be well pleased with him)."

2. He must be a competent reciter [*qāri'*] of the Book of Allāh, a trained expert [*faqīh*] in the religion [*dīn*] of Allāh, and a proficient student of the exemplary practice [*sunna*] of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), because the latter said, as reported in the tradition [*ḥadīth*]:

> Entrust the oversight of your religion to your experts in Islāmic jurisprudence [*fuqahā'*], and let your prayer leaders [*a'imma*] be the Qur'ān-reciters [*qurrā'*] among you.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Those who lead you in prayer are your finest élite [*ya'ummu-kum khiyāru-kum*], for they are your ambassadorial delegates [*wufūd*] to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

By according them this special accolade, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was simply drawing attention to the fact that they are people distinguished by religious faith and virtue, knowledge of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and fear of Allāh (Exalted is He), who are concerned not only with their own prayer *[salāt]*, but also with the prayer performed by those behind them. They are keenly aware of the responsibility they must bear, both for themselves and for those behind them, if they are guilty of any impropriety in their performance of the ritual prayer *[salāt]*.

When he mentioned the Qur'ān-reciters *[qurrā']*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was not referring to those who have merely memorized the text of the Qur'ān, without putting it into practice. What he meant to emphasize (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was the importance of acting on the message of the Qur'ān, as well as learning it by heart. As we are told in the tradition *[hadīth]*:

> The person most worthy of this Qur'ān is someone who puts it into practice, even if he does not read it.

It is quite possible for the Qur'ān to be memorized by someone who fails to put it into practice, and who makes not the slightest effort to abide by the rules it lays down, neither implementing the prescriptions enjoined upon him by Allāh, nor observing the prohibitions He has imposed upon him. We are not interested in such a person, and he deserves no respect. Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> A person can hardly believe in the Qur'ān, if he considers it permissible to do the things it has declared unlawful.

It is not permissible, therefore, for people to set anyone in front of them in their ritual prayer *[salāt]*, as a leader *[imām]*, other than the individual amongst them who knows Allāh best, and fears him the most. If they go against this instruction, and appoint someone less qualified, they will suffer constant ignominy, backwardness and deficiency in their religion, and remoteness from Allāh (Exalted is He), from His good pleasure *[riḍwān]*,[257] and from His Garden of Paradise.

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[257] As an ordinary noun, the Arabic word *riḍwān* means "approval, consent, good pleasure." In the standard works of reference, the angel called Riḍwān is variously described as the porter, the gardener, the doorkeeper, the keeper, the guardian, the treasurer, or the custodian of Paradise.

May Allāh bestow His mercy upon any group of people who take a serious interest in their religion *[dīn]* and their ritual prayers *[salawāt]*, so that they appoint their finest élite *[khiyār]* to lead them. In so doing, they will be following the exemplary practice *[sunna]* of their Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and thereby seeking nearness to their Lord (Blessed and Exalted is He).

3. It is also important that the prayer leader *[imām]* should be someone who is careful to guard his tongue from responding, when people engage in faultfinding and backbiting at his expense, unless he has something good to say.

4. He must not only enjoin what is right and fair *[ma'rūf]*, but also practice it himself, and he must not only forbid what is wrong and unfair *[munkar]*, but also avoid committing it himself.[258]

5. He must love goodness and those who practice it, and he must hate evil and those who practice it.

6. He must be thoroughly familiar with the exact times prescribed for the ritual prayer *[mawāqīt aṣ-ṣalāt]*, and meticulous in observing them.

7. He must fully appreciate the significance and the serious importance of his rôle.

8. He must be chaste with regard to his stomach and his sexual organs *['afīf al-baṭn wa 'l-farj]*, and keep his hand withdrawn from contact with things that are unlawful *[maḥārim]*.

9. He must expend little energy for any purpose other than seeking to obtain the approval of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

10. He must be mild-tempered, long-suffering, and patient in the face of injury and insult. This means that he must turn a blind eye to mischievous provocation, be tolerant of those who speak ill of him, be patient with those who treat him foolishly, and behave well toward those who behave badly toward him.

11. He must beware of taking a prurient interest in things that are unlawful *[maḥārim]*. If he sees that a private part *['awra]* is exposed to view, he must cover it up, and if he happens to notice something shameful, he must conceal it.

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[258] Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has devoted an entire Chapter, earlier in the present work, to the duty to enjoin what is what is right and fair and to forbid what is wrong and unfair *[al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf wa 'n-nahy 'an 'l-munkar]*. (See Vol. 1, pp. 151–70.)

12. He must shun altercation with ignorant fools, and respond to their nonsense by saying: "O Allāh, let there be peace! *[Allāhumma salāmā]*."[259]

13. While other people should find him to be a reassuring source of comfort, his feeling about himself must be one of grave concern, as he yearns for deliverance and strives for his personal salvation.

14. He must acknowledge that he is being put to the test, recognize the magnitude of the challenge he faces, and understand the momentous significance and enormous importance of the task assigned to him. His overriding concern must therefore be to discharge the solemn responsibility laid upon him, by proving himself worthy of the great dignity of the prayer leader's rôle *[imāma]*, its tremendous value, and its beneficial quality.

15. He must be a man of few words, except when he needs to speak about matters relating to his sphere of interest.

16. [He must be aware that] there is a state of being *[ḥāl]* that is appropriate for him [as prayer leader], and a state of being that is appropriate for the people [who follow his lead].

17. When he stands in his prayer-niche *[miḥrāb]*, he must realize that he is standing in the station of the Prophets *[maqām an-Nabiyyīn]* and of the Caliph of the Chief of the Messengers *[Khalīfa Sayyid al-Mursalīn]*, and that he is communing with the Lord of All the Worlds *[yunājī Rabb al-'Ālamīn]*.

18. He must exercise his independent judgment *[ijtihād]*,[260] in order to ensure the complete performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and also to ensure the well-being of those behind him, meaning those who are following his leadership *[imāma]*.

19. He must keep the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* as short and simple as possible, without prejudice to its completeness.

20. He must conduct the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* in a way that accommodates the weakest member of the congregation. This means that he must regard himself as inferior to those who pray behind him, recognizing that their leadership *[imāma]* has been assigned to him as a test, and realizing that Allāh (Exalted is He) will hold him responsible for the performance of the obligatory duties *[farā'iḍ]*, not just on his own account, but also on that of the weakest member of the congregation.

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[259] This is a clear allusion to Q. 25:63.

[260] See note 177 on p. 132 above.

21. When putting himself forward to lead the congregation, he should do so as one who is tearfully lamenting his mistakes, feeling remorse for his previous negligence and his former sins, and regretting his lost opportunities.

22. He must not adopt a proud and haughty attitude toward those who pray behind him, nor assume an air of superiority over those to whom he is actually subordinate.

23. He must not become a fanatical champion of his own cause, when comments are made about his positive qualities and his shortcomings. He should neither like it when people praise him, nor dislike it when they blame him. His attitude toward the congregation should be the same in either case.

24. He must be someone to whom no falsehood can be imputed.

25. He must be well-mannered in his eating habits.

26. He must be someone who keeps his clothes clean and tidy.

27. He must be modest in his style of dressing, and unassuming in the way he sits in company.

28. He must not be someone who has been punished *[mahdūd]* for a serious offense against the law of Islām.[261]

29. He must not be the kind of person who arouses misgivings in people.

30. He must not be the kind of person who would denounce his brother to the political authority *[sultān]*.

31. He must not be someone who divulges people's secrets. (That is to say, he must not be someone who broadcasts them.)

32. He must not be someone who goes looking for the worst in people.

33. He must not be the kind of person who harbors feelings of hatred and resentment toward his brother.

34. He must not be the kind of person who would cheat in his management of funds entrusted to him, in his commercial dealings, or in the repayment of a loan.

35. He must not put himself forward [to lead the prayer] as long as his diet and his means of livelihood are unclean.

36. He must not put himself forward as long as he feels a craving to occupy the prayer leader's position *[imāma]*.

37. He must not put himself forward as long as he recognizes that he

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[261] The term *mahdūd* is applied to a person who has suffered the penalty *[hadd]* prescribed by Islāmic law for one of the offenses listed in note 228 on p. 166 above.

with the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*. He must not place his hands in line with top of his head.

He must keep his fingers close together, and point them toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba]. As we have previously explained,[252] he must keep his upper arms well clear of the sides of his body, his thighs from touching the calves of his legs, and his stomach from coming in contact with the ground.

While he is in the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*, the worshipper must say:

Glory to my Lord, the Most High! *Subhāna Rabbiya 'l-A'lā*

He should utter this glorification three times, as in the posture of bowing *[rukū']*.

Then he must raise his head, saying *[mukabbiran]*:[253]

Allāh is Supremely Great! *Allāhu Akbar!*

He must now sit on his left leg, while placing his right leg so that the right foot is in an upright position [i.e., with the heel raised], and so that his toes are pointing toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba]. While sitting in this posture, he must say:

My Lord, forgive me! *Rabbi 'ghfir lī*

He should say this three times, while glancing at his breast.

Next, he must prostrate himself *[yasjudu]* a second time, in the same manner as before. Then he must raise his head from the ground, saying *[mukabbiran]*:

Allāh is Supremely Great! *Allāhu Akbar!*

Then he must raise his hands from the ground, and then his knees, relying on his knees to lift his weight. As he rises to stand on the soles of his feet, he should not put one foot ahead of the other, for that is considered reprehensible. It has even been said that it cuts off the ritual prayer *[salāt]*, and there is a traditional report to that effect, transmitted on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

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[252] See the list of forty-five bad habits, on pp. 169–73 above.

[253] In the Arabic text, the participle *mukabbiran* is sufficient, all by itself, to signify "saying: '*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great]'" Like the superlative adjective *akbar*, the verb *kabbara*, and the verbal noun *takbīr*, it is derived from the three-consonant root *k-b-r*.

are some amongst them who disapprove of him, and some who do not disapprove of him, he must investigate the situation thoroughly. Then, if he discovers that those who disapprove of him are in the majority, he must vacate the prayer-niche *[miḥrāb]* and decline to approach it again.

This only applies if their disapproval of him is based on sound knowledge and a true assessment of his character. If it is due to ignorance, falsehood and stupidity, or to fanatical adherence to a particular doctrine *['aṣaba li-madhhab]*, or to some heretical tendency *[hawā]*, he should pay no attention to their disapproval. If such is the case, he should not refrain from leading them in the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, unless he has reason to fear that an outbreak of public disorder could be sparked by his failure to withdraw. Under these circumstances, he should step aside and vacate the prayer-niche *[miḥrāb]*, until such time as the people have become reconciled with one another, and are content to accept his leadership.

52. He must not be the kind of person who is always getting into arguments, or who is constantly swearing and cursing.

53. He must not be someone who finds pretexts for dabbling in matters that are unsavory and highly suspect.

56. He must not be on intimate terms, or engage in social intercourse, with people other than the righteous *[ṣāliḥīn]*.

57. It is not appropriate for him to serve as a prayer leader *[imām]* as long as he is still has a fondness for mischievous intrigue *[fitna]* and those who practice it, and even worse, for sinful disobedience *[ma'ṣiya]* and those who practice it, and for political leadership *[riyāsa]* and those who are interested in pursuing it.

58. In order to qualify, he must be very patient in coping with the injuries and insults people can inflict, lovingly disposed toward them, eager to secure their welfare, and dedicated to providing them with constructive advice.

59. He must not quarrel over the position of prayer leader *[imāma]*, and he certainly must not come to blows over it, with someone who is just as well qualified to carry out the task.

As we know from traditional reports concerning the great figures of the past, our righteous forebears had a strong aversion to assuming the prayer leader's rôle *[imāma]*, so much so that they would put forward

in Allāh and what has been sent	*bi'llāhi wa mā unzila*
down to you,	*ilai-kum*
and what has been sent down	*wa mā unzila*
to them, humble toward Allāh,	*ilai-him khāshi'īna li'llāhi*
not selling Allāh's signs	*lā yashtarūna bi-āyāti 'llāhi*
for a small price.	*thamanan qalīlā: ulā'ika*
Their reward is with their Lord.	*la-hum ajru-hum 'inda Rabbi-him*
Allāh is Swift at reckoning.	*inna 'llāha Sarī'u 'l-ḥisāb*

O you who believe, be patient,	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanu 'ṣbirū*
and vie in patience, be steadfast,	*wa ṣābirū wa rābiṭū*
and observe your duty to Allāh,	*wa 'ttaqu 'llāha*
in order that you may succeed.	*la'alla-kum tufliḥūn*
(3:191–200)	

Next, he should proceed to clean his teeth with a toothbrush [*siwāk*], and perform the minor ritual ablution [*wuḍū'*]. Then he should say:

Glory be to You,	*subḥāna-ka*
and with Your praise!	*wa bi-ḥamdi-ka*
There is no god but You.	*lā ilāha illā Anta*
I seek Your forgiveness	*astaghfiru-ka*
and I beg You to accept	*wa as'alu-ka 't-*
my repentance,	*tauba:*
so forgive me and relent toward me,	*fa-'ghfir lī wa tub 'alaiyya*
for You are the Ever-Relenting,	*inna-ka Anta 't-Tawwābu'r-*
the All-Compassionate.	*Raḥīm.*

O Allāh, let me be	*Allāhumma 'j'al-nī*
one of those who repent.	*mina 't-tawwābīn:*
Let me be one of those	*wa 'j'al-nī*
who purify themselves.	*mina 'l-mutaṭahhirīn:*
Let me be very patient	*wa 'j'al-nī ṣabūran*
and very thankful,	*shakūrā:*
Let me be one of those	*wa 'j'al-nī mim-man*
who remember You	*yadhkuru-ka dhikran*
very, very often,	*kathīrā:*
and who glorify You	*wa yusabbiḥu-ka*
both early and late.	*bukratan wa aṣīlā.*

Then he should raise his head heavenward and say:

I bear witness	*ashhadu an*
that there is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu Waḥda-h*
Alone, without partner.	*lā sharīka la-h:*
I also bear witness that	*wa ashhadu*
Muḥammad is His servant	*anna Muḥammadan 'abdu-hu*
and His Messenger.	*wa Rasūlu-h.*
I take refuge with Your pardon	*a'ūdhu bi-'afwi-ka*
from Your torment.	*min 'adhābi-ka*

25.

Concerning the intention *[niyya]* of the prayer leader *[imām]*, his instructions to the congregation, and how he ought to station himself in the prayer-niche *[miḥrāb]*.

The prayer leader *[imām]* must not embark upon the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, nor should he pronounce the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[lā yukabbir]*,[263] until he has made the intention, at least with his heart, to carry out the task of leadership *[imāma]*. If he also expresses his intention with his tongue, so much the better.

[Before starting the prayer] he should turn and look to right and left, for he must make sure that the worshippers are lined up in perfectly straight rows. He should then say:

Hold yourselves erect!	***istaqīmū***
May Allāh bestow His mercy upon you!	*yarḥamu-kumu 'llāh*.
Straighten your ranks!	***i'tadilū***
May Allāh be well pleased with you!	*raḍiya 'llāhu 'an-kum*

He should instruct them to fill the gaps in their ranks, to hold their shoulders in an even line, and to move closer to one another until their shoulders are actually touching. This is very important, because any crookedness of the shoulders and unevenness of the ranks will represent a diminution of the value of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and will provide a opportunity for the devils *[shayāṭīn]* to come and stand alongside the people in the rows. As we learn from the tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> Align the rows tightly, keep the shoulders straight, and fill the gaps, so as to leave no space for the likes of the offspring of the *ḥadhaf*[264] to stand between you.

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[263] That is to say, [until he has formulated his intention—] he should not utter the *takbīra*, meaning the affirmation, "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great']," which is pronounced as an act of consecration *[iḥrām]* at the beginning of the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

[264] According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the term *ḥadhaf* is applied to small, black sheep or goats, with short and fine wool or hair, without tails and without ears, or to the young ones of sheep or goats, in general, or, metaphorically, to various other creatures. (See: E.W. Lane, ***Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ḥ–DH–F*.**)

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59. He must not quarrel over the position of prayer leader *[imāma]*, and he certainly must not come to blows over it, with someone who is just as well qualified to carry out the task.

As we know from traditional reports concerning the great figures of the past, our righteous forebears had a strong aversion to assuming the prayer leader's rôle *[imāma]*, so much so that they would put forward had assigned the task of drawing up the ranks, came and informed him that they had been properly aligned. Only at that point would he pronounce the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness. The same practice was later implemented by [the pious Umayyad Caliph] ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

It is related that Bilāl the Muezzin [*al-Muʾadhdhin*] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) had a special method of his own for persuading the members of the congregation to straighten their ranks: He used to thrash them on their Achilles' tendons [*ʿarāqīb*] with a kind of whip called the *dirra*, until they aligned themselves in proper order. As one of the learned scholars [*ʿulamāʾ*] has pointed out:

"The obvious conclusion to be drawn, in considering the implications of this report, is that Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him) must have followed that practice during the lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), whenever he was about to make the announcement of readiness [*iqāma*],[266] just before he [the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)] embarked on the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. It must have been during that period, because Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him) did not act as muezzin [*lam yuʾadhdhin*] for anyone after the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), except on one particular day, after his return from Syria during the time of [the Caliph] Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth [*aṣ-Ṣiddīq*], (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

"On that one occasion, he responded to the request of Abū Bakr and the other Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all), for they all shared a sense of longing for Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and for his era. But when Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him) reached the words:

I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh.	*ashhadu anna* *Muhammadan Rasūluʾllāh*

—he suddenly desisted from giving the call to prayer [*adhān*], because he was simply unable to continue with it any further. He swooned and fell down in a faint, overwhelmed by love for the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and yearning for his company. At that point, the mournful lamentation of those senior citizens of Medina, the

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[266] See note 304 on p. 225 below.

Emigrés *[Muhājirūn]* and the Helpers *[Anṣār]*,[267] became extremely loud and intense, so much so that the elderly widows and spinsters *[ʿawātiq]*[268] emerged from their private quarters, moved by a nostalgic longing for the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

"It is therefore definitely established, on the basis of these historical facts, that his practice of thrashing the members of the congregation on their Achilles' tendons *[ʿarāqib]* was put into effect during the lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)."

It is not appropriate for the prayer leader *[imām]* to station himself inside the inner niche *[ṭāq]* of the *Qibla*, thereby blocking the view of it that would otherwise be available to the members of the congregation behind him. He should rather stand back from it a little way. [According to another account of his doctrine, however, our Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) maintained that it is actually commendable for the prayer leader *[imām]* to station himself inside the inner niche.]

He must not station himself on a spot that would place him on a higher level than those who are following his lead *[maʾmūmīn]*. If he does this, some experts have argued, his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* will be rendered null and void.

Once he has concluded his performance of the ritual prayer *[sallama min ṣalāti-hi]*,[269] it is not appropriate for him to linger in his niche *[miḥrāb]*. He should get up promptly and move over to his left, then perform his supererogatory devotions *[tanafful]* on that side of the niche *[miḥrāb]*. This is based on the traditional report of al-Mughīra ibn Shuʿba[270] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who stated that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

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[267] See note 148 on p. 115 above.

[268] The term ʿātiq (of which ʿawātiq is the plural form) is applied to a woman who is her own mistress, in the sense of having outlived her parents and being beyond the normal age for marriage (or remarriage, in the case of a widow or divorcée). The Arabic root ʿ–t–q conveys the basic idea of "emancipation." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. ʿ–T–Q.)

[269] See note 255 on p. 187 above.

[270] Al-Mughīra ibn Shuʿba (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is often referred to by the nickname Mughīrat ar-Raʾy ["Quick-witted"], which he acquired in recognition of his proverbial ingenuity. He claimed that he was the last man to be with the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and he used to say: "I took my ring and let it fall into the grave, then I said: 'My ring has dropped.' But I had actually thrown it in on purpose, so that I might touch the Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and be the last man to be with him." At the time of his death, in A.H. 49., he held the important post of Governor of Kūfa.

> The prayer leader *[imām]* must not go on to perform voluntary devotions *[lā yataṭawwaʿ]* in the place he occupies while leading the people in the prescribed prayer *[maktūba]*.

In the case of the follower *[maʾmūm]*, on the other hand, the equivalent of this is quite permissible. Since he is allowed the option, he may either perform his [voluntary] prayers on the same spot, if he wishes to do so, or he may choose to move back from it a little way.

The prayer leader *[imām]* must observe two moments of silent pause: (1) at the very beginning of the prayer *[iftitāḥ aṣ-ṣalāt]*, and (2) when he has finished the Qurʾānic recitation *[qirāʾa]*, just before he adopts the bowing posture *[qabla an yarkaʿa]*, so that he may catch his breath and calm the intense vibration experienced during his recitation. He must not combine his Qurʾānic recitation uninterruptedly with the affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness that precedes the adoption of the bowing posture *[takbīrat ar-rukūʿ]*, because an instruction to this effect is attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* reported by Samura ibn Jundab (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

When he performs the prayer with a screening object in front of him *[ṣallā ilā sutra]*,[271] he must position himself very close to it. If he leaves any gap at all between himself and the object used as a screen, it must not be wide enough to allow a wild black dog, or a donkey, or a woman, to pass through. Should any of these come in between, his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* will be cut off at that point, according to the doctrine of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, our Imām, (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). As far as the donkey and the woman are concerned, however, there is another account of his doctrine, according to which these two are harmless in this respect.[272]

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[271] According to E.W. Lane (*Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *S-T-R*), the predominant application of the term *sutra* [screening object] is to "a thing which a person praying sets up before him, [sticking it in the ground, or laying it down if the ground be hard, in order that no living being or image may be the object next before him,] such as a whip, and a staff having a pointed iron at its lower extremity."

At various times, according to traditions *[aḥādīth]* recorded by Imām al-Bukhārī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used a wide range of creatures and articles as *sutra* objects, including baggage-camels, horses, trees, saddles, a couch, a lance, a stick, and the pillars of a mosque.

[272] According to a traditional report recorded by Imām al-Bukhārī, ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once exclaimed: "Would you place us women on the same level as donkeys and dogs? By Allāh, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* while I was lying on the couch between him and the *Qibla*."

When the prayer leader [*imām*] adopts the bowing posture [*idhā raka'a*], he must utter three glorifications [*tasbīḥāt*],[271] in the manner we have previously described. He must be careful not to utter them too rapidly or too soon, and they should be fully pronounced, in a calm, deliberate, and clearly audible voice. This is very important because, if he utters the glorification [*tasbīḥ*] too quickly, the people behind him will not be able to keep pace with him. This may result in a situation where the members of the congregation [*ma'mūmīn*] start to anticipate his movements. Their prayer will thus be spoiled, and he will incur the liability for their sin.

The same considerations apply when he raises his head from the bowing posture [*rukū'*], and says:

May Allāh hear and accept	*sami'a 'llāhu*
the praise of one who praises Him!	*li-man ḥamidah.*

—then stands quite still in an upright posture, while he says:

Our Lord, and to You be the praise!	*Rabba-nā wa la-ka 'l-ḥamd.*

He must pronounce these words in an unhurried voice, so that the members of the congregation [*ma'mūmūn*] can easily keep up with him. If he goes on to add the words:

Enough [praise] to fill the heavens	*mil'u 's-samāwāti*
and the earth,	*wa mil'u 'l-arḍ:*
and to fill anything	*wa mil'u mā shi'ta*
beyond them, as You wish.	*min shai'in ba'd.*

—this is quite permissible, because the practice is reliably attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

"When Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) raised his head from the bowing posture [*rukū'*], he used to stand upright for such a long time [before making the prostration], that people would say: 'He seems to have forgotten [what comes next].'"

In the posture of prostration [*sujūd*], and when he adopts the sitting posture [*jalsa*] between the two acts of prostration [*sajdatain*], he must

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[271] In other words, he must say, three times:

Glory to my Lord, the Almighty!	*Subḥāna Rabbiya 'l-'Aẓīm.*

likewise hold himself still for a while, so that those behind him can keep up with him in the performance of each essential element *[rukn]*.[274]

No serious attention need be paid to the assertion of those who say: "If he does that [i.e., if he holds his posture for a considerable length of time], someone who is supposed to be following his lead *[ma'mūm]* may anticipate his next move, and that person's ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* will thus be rendered null and void." The reasoning here is faulty, if we are assuming that he does that on a regular basis, because people will realize, when they notice that he does it constantly and persistently, that holding a steady posture is his normal practice. They will therefore keep pace with him, and not move prematurely.

The prayer leader *[imām]* should also be given the following advice: "It is recommended that you should instill some fear in them, before embarking on the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and that you should warn them against anticipating your movements, as we shall explain in the following subsection. Far from having a negative effect, this will be conducive to the common good, and to the completeness of everyone's ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*."

As we are informed in the words of the tradition *[ḥadīth]*:

> Every performer of the ritual prayer is a shepherd, and he will be held responsible for his flock *[kullu muṣallin rā'in wa mas'ūlun 'an ra'iyyati-hi]*.

It has also been said that the prayer leader *[imām]* is a shepherd in relation to those whom he leads in the prayer.

It is therefore incumbent upon the prayer leader *[imām]* to give wise advice to those pray behind him. He must warn them against premature movement in the stages of bowing *[rukū']* and prostration *[sujūd]*. He must do what he can to improve their behavior, since he is a shepherd to them now, and he will be held responsible for them tomorrow [on the Day of Resurrection].

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[274] As explained by the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) in Vol. 1, pp. 13–14:

The ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* has some elements that are essential *[arkān*, pl. of *rukn]*, some that are necessities *[wājibāt]*, some that are recommended *[masnūnāt]*, and yet others that are formal refinements *[hai'āt]*. As for the basic essentials *[arkān]* these are fifteen in number. (1) Standing in an upright posture *[qiyām]*. (2) The consecratory declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīrat al-iḥrām]*. (3) Recitation of *al-Fātiḥa*. (4) Bowing *[rukū']*. (5) Calm composure in the bowing posture. (6) Straightening up from the bowing posture. (7) Calm composure in the erect posture. (8) Prostration *[sujūd]*. (9) Calm composure in the posture of prostration. (10) Sitting between the two acts of prostration. (11) Calm composure in the sitting posture. (12) The final testimony *[tashahhud]*. (13) Adopting a sitting posture in order to make the final testimony. (14) Invocation of blessing *[ṣalāh]* on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). (15) The salutation *[taslīm]*.

He must also strive to perfect his own ritual prayer [*salāt*], to master its performance and improve it, in order that he may be entitled to receive the same reward as those who pray behind him. Failure to do so will result in his being charged with the weight of their sins, whenever he acts badly and falls short.

26.

Concerning the *ma'mūm*, i.e., the worshipper who follows a leader *[imām]* when performing his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, either singly or as a member of a congregation *[jamā'a]*.

As for the *ma'mūm*, i.e., the worshipper who follows a leader *[imām]* when performing his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, it is incumbent upon him to formulate the intention to pray in that capacity *[an yanwiya 'l-i'timām]*.

[If there is only one *ma'mūm* present] he must station himself to the right of the prayer leader *[imām]*; he must not stand in front of him, and he must not stand to his left.

If they are a congregation *[jamā'a]*,[275] however, the customary practice *[sunna]* is for them to stand behind the prayer leader *[imām]*. So, if only one *ma'mūm* is present at the outset, standing to the leader's right as he utters the initial declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[kabbara]*, and another worshipper arrives at that point, the newcomer should join him in saying "*Allāhu Akbar*," while squeezing into line beside him. Then the two of them should move back together, to form a row behind the prayer leader *[imām]*. If there is not enough space to accommodate the second person, the prayer leader *[imām]* should push the pair of them back with his hand. He should not move forward from his own spot, unless there is a severe shortage of space behind him.

If a worshipper arrives when the congregation *[jamā'a]* is already assembled, and he can find a gap in the row, he should insert himself into it. If he cannot find any gap to occupy, he must station himself to the right of the prayer leader *[imām]*. He must not pull a man back abruptly, to stand beside him and form a new row, because that is likely to result in confusion and disharmony, and may stir up feelings of hatred and hostility. It will also have the effect of invalidating the prayer *[ṣalāt]* performed by the one who is pulled out of his row, because he will become a solitary individual *[fadhdh]* in the process, and that [detachment from the ranks of the congregation] invalidates the ritual prayer *[salāt]*, according to our doctrine *['inda-nā]*.[276]

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[275] That is to say, if there is more than one *ma'mūm* present.

The late arrival should make a serious effort to squeeze his shoulders into the row, so that he can utter the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[yukabbiru]* and enter into the ritual prayer in a state of consecration *[yuhrimu bi's-salāt]*.[277] He may then step back, together with one of the other worshippers, to form a new row.

If he enters the mosque *[masjid]* at the stage where the prayer leader *[imām]* is already in the bowing posture *[rukū']*, the latecomer should pronounce two declarations of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[kabbara takbīratain]*: one of them for the purpose of consecration *[li'l-ihrām]*, and the other in connection with the act of bowing *[li'r-rukū']*.[278] It is permissible, however, for him to utter only one such declaration, while intending them both *[in kabbara wāhida wa nawā-humā]*.

If he enters at the stage where the prayer leader *[imām]* is already pronouncing the final testimony *[at-tashahhud al-akhīr]*,[279] his recommended course is to formulate the intention to perform the prayer *[an yanwiya 'ṣ-ṣalat]*, to pronounce the [consecratory] declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[yukabbira]*, and to sit down next to the prayer leader *[imām]*, so that he will still be in time to share the merit of the congregation *[jamā'a]*. Then, when the leader concludes the congregational prayer with the salutation *[idhā sallama 'l-imām]*, the late arrival should build on his [consecratory] declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness, and go on to perform a complete ritual prayer by himself *[banā 'alā takbīrati-hi wa sallā]*.

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[276] When he uses the expression *'inda-nā* [in our opinion, according to our doctrine], Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is referring to the doctrine of the Ḥanbalī school *[madhhab]* of Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]*.

[277] In other words, he must insert himself sufficiently to be counted as a member of the congregation, at which point he can validly pronounce the consecratory declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīrat al-ihrām]*, by saying: "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great']."

[278] See the description of *takbīrat ar-rukū'* on pp. 180–81 above.

[279] That is to say, when the performance of that particular ritual prayer *[salāt]* is within a few moments of being concluded. (For the wording of the final testimony *[at-tashahhud al-akhīr]*, see pp. 184 and 185 above.)

4.

Concerning the fact that the first two of the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* to be enjoined upon our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) were the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]* and the sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*.

The first two of the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* that were enjoined upon our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and that he was commanded to perform, were the dawn and sunset prayers *[ṣalāt al-fajr wa 'l-maghrib]*.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) had made the pronouncement:

And extol the praise of your Lord	*wa sabbiḥ bi-ḥamdi Rabbi-ka*
in the evening and early	*bi'l-'ashiyyi*
in the morning. (40:55)	*wa 'l-ibkār.*

His Messenger therefore made it his regular practice (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to perform two cycles *[rak'atain]* of ritual prayer in the early morning *[ghadāh]* and two cycles in the evening *['ashiyy]*. This continued until the Night of the Heavenly Ascension *[Lailat al-Mi'rāj]*, the night when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was transported on his Heavenly Journey *[Isrā']*, at which point five daily prayers *[ṣalawāt]* were prescribed for him.

The dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]* is actually the first prayer of the daytime *[nahār]*, then comes the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*. It is customary, however, for the religious scholars *['ulamā']* to begin their listing and learned treatment of the prayers with the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*. This custom is based on the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* reported by Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

> Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to visit me beside the House [the House of Allāh, the Ka'ba]. There he led me in the midday prayer *[ṣallā bi-ya 'ẓ-ẓuhr]*, as soon as the sun had declined from the meridian, just enough to lengthen a shadow by the width of the strap of a sandal *[shirāk]*.[150]

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[150] See p. 114 above, where the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has already quoted this tradition *[ḥadīth]* in full.

That could be the time it takes to perform four cycles of prayer [*rakaʿāt*], or it may only be enough for two cycles [*rakʿatain*].

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Two cycles of ritual prayer [*rakʿatain*], performed by the servant [of the Lord] in the middle of the night, are better than this world and all that it contains. But for the hardship it would have caused my Community [*Ummati*], I would have made them obligatory.

All of this was intended to make it easy for his Community [*Umma*] to keep night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*] and to practice worshipful service [*ʿibāda*]. He did not wish it to be burdensome for them, and for worshipful service to be unpleasant for them, so that they would become weary and bored. Far from it! He simply steered them (Allāh bless him and give him peace) toward the keeping of night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], by mentioning its excellent merit and its spiritual reward, so that they would not confine themselves exclusively to the obligatory religious duties [*farāʾiḍ*] and established customary practices [*sunan*].[57]

For the keeping of vigil, one third is the fraction of the night that is most strongly recommended, while the least recommended is one sixth. This is because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never once kept vigil throughout the whole of a night until morning. He would always take some sleep in the course of it. Nor did he ever sleep throughout the whole of a night until morning. He would always keep vigil during some part of it, as we have explained.

It has been said that the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] of the first part of the night is for those who observe *tahajjud*;[58] the vigil [*qiyām*] kept in the middle part of it is for the humbly devout [*qānitīn*]; the vigil kept in the last part of it is for worshippers devoted to the ritual prayer [*muṣallīn*]; and the vigil kept at the break of dawn [*qiyām al-fajr*] is for the heedless.

Yūsuf ibn Mihrān (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "Beneath the Heavenly Throne [*ʿArsh*], as I have been informed, there is an angel in the shape of a rooster [*dīk*]. Its talons are of pearl and its spurs of green topaz. When the first third of

who are following his lead *[ma'mūmīn]*. For one who is leading others in prayer, brevity is the recommended practice *[mustaḥabb]*, out of consideration for their feelings, and because there may be someone amongst them who has a pressing need to attend to.

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[57] The term *sunna* (of which *sunan* is the plural form) may be applied to a particular practice recommended by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as well as to his exemplary conduct in general. Although there are no capital letters in the Arabic script, it is convenient to mark the distinction, in transliteration, between the specific *sunna*/*sunan* and the general *Sunna*.

[58] See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

The worshipper must then conclude the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* by performing the salutation *[taslīma]*,[255] after which he should offer supplications for his own sake, for the sake of his parents, and on behalf of all the Muslims.

At every stage in all of this, the worshipper must be timidly apprehensive about its ultimate outcome, wondering how his prayer may be received in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He), the One who summons us to it, the One who commands us to perform it, the One who rewards us for it [if it is acceptable], and the One who punishes us for it, if it is done badly. So, when he finally emerges from the process, he should undertake a conscious review of his performance. Then, if he can honestly give it a clearance and a clean bill of health, he must offer grateful praise to Allāh (Exalted is He), since He is the One who made him capable of such an achievement. If, on the other hand, he finds it marred by deficiency and imperfection, he must repent to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) and seek Allāh's forgiveness. He must prepare himself to do better, and make a serious effort to be more careful in future.

There is a clear indication to prove that a ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* has been accepted, and an equally clear indication to prove that it has been rejected. The sure sign of its acceptance is that it has been effective in deterring and preventing its owner from indulging in immoral behavior and reprehensible conduct, while encouraging him to do better, renewing his intention to strive after righteousness, increasing his acts of worshipful obedience, his charitable deeds, his eagerness for spiritual rewards, his resistance to bad influences, and his disapproval of sinful acts of disobedience and misconduct. For, as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

The ritual prayer helps to prevent	*inna 'ṣ-ṣalāta tanhā*
indecency and reprehensible behavior.	*'ani 'l-faḥshā'i wa 'l-munkar.*
The remembrance of Allāh is greater,	*wa la-dhikru 'llāhi akbar*
and Allāh knows the things you do.	*wa 'llāhu ya'lamu mā taṣna'ūn.*
(29:45)	

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[255] In other words, he must turn his head to the right and say:

Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh	*as-salāmu 'alaikum wa raḥmatu'llāh*

—then turn his head to the left and repeat these same words.

26.

Concerning the *maʼmūm*, i.e., the worshipper who follows a leader *[imām]* when performing his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, either singly or as a member of a congregation *[jamāʻa]*.

As for the *maʼmūm*, i.e., the worshipper who follows a leader *[imām]* when performing his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, it is incumbent upon him to formulate the intention to pray in that capacity *[an yanwiya 'l-iʼtimām]*.

[If there is only one *maʼmūm* present] he must station himself to the right of the prayer leader *[imām]*; he must not stand in front of him, and he must not stand to his left.

If they are a congregation *[jamāʻa]*,[275] however, the customary practice *[sunna]* is for them to stand behind the prayer leader *[imām]*. So, if only one *maʼmūm* is present at the outset, standing to the leader's right as he utters the initial declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[kabbara]*, and another worshipper arrives at that point, the newcomer should join him in saying "*Allāhu Akbar*," while squeezing into line beside him. Then the two of them should move back together, to form a row behind the prayer leader *[imām]*. If there is not enough space to accommodate the second person, the prayer leader *[imām]* should push the pair of them back with his hand. He should not move forward from his own spot, unless there is a severe shortage of space behind him.

If a worshipper arrives when the congregation *[jamāʻa]* is already assembled, and he can find a gap in the row, he should insert himself into it. If he cannot find any gap to occupy, he must station himself to the right of the prayer leader *[imām]*. He must not pull a man back abruptly, to stand beside him and form a new row, because that is likely to result in confusion and disharmony, and may stir up feelings of hatred and hostility. It will also have the effect of invalidating the prayer *[ṣalāt]*

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[275] That is to say, if there is more than one *maʼmūm* present.

> "'When he raises his head and says "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]," you must then raise your heads and say "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]" *[idhā ... kabbara ... fa- ... kabbirū]*.'"

"At this point, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) remarked:

> "'And so on, and so forth *[fa-tilka bi-tilka]*.
>
> "'When he is in the sitting posture *[qu'da]*, each of you must repeat the words:

Greetings, prayers and good deeds are due to Allāh...	*at-taḥiyyātu li'llāhi wa 'ṣ-ṣalawātu wa 't-ṭayyibāt...*

> —until you come to the end of the testimony *[tashahhud]*.'"[280]

The following explanations have been provided by Imām Abū 'Abdu'llāh Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ḥanbal ash-Shaibānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him; may He allow us to die faithful, root and branch, to the doctrine of his school *[madhhab]*, and may He assemble us at the Resurrection as members of his company!):

"Let us first consider the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> When he pronounces the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness, you must then pronounce the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[idhā kabbara fa-kabbirū]*.

"This means that the members of the congregation must wait for the prayer leader *[imām]* to say: '*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]' *[ḥattā yukabbira]*. They must wait and listen until he has completed his declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*, and until the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. Then, and only then, should they repeat after him: '*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]' *[yukabbirūna ba'dah]*.

"People grossly misinterpret these Prophetic sayings *[aḥādīth]*, and even ignore them altogether, not to mention the fact that most of them regard the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* as a trivial matter, which hardly deserves their serious attention. So it sometimes happens that, as soon as the prayer leader *[imām]* starts to pronounce the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*, they all launch into the *takbīr* simultaneously with him, thereby committing a grave mistake. It is not correct for them to start pronouncing the *takbīr* until the prayer leader *[imām]* has finished saying: '*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!],' and the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. This is what the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) meant, when he said:

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[280] For the complete wording of the testimony *[tashahhud]*, see pp. 84 and 85 above.

> When the prayer leader pronounces the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness, you must then pronounce the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[idhā kabbara 'l-imām fa-kabbirū]*.

"The prayer leader *[imām]* does not become a proclaimer of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[mukabbir]* until he says: '*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]' If he were to say: '*Allāhu....*,' and then fall silent, the prayer leader *[imām]* would not yet be a proclaimer of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[mukabbir]*—not before having said: '*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]'

"The people [in the congregation] should therefore pronounce the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[yukabbiru 'n-nās]* after he has said: '*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]' By launching into the *takbīr* simultaneously with the prayer leader *[imām]*, they are committing a grave mistake. They are also guilty of disregarding the word of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), for the following reason:

"Suppose you were to say: 'When so-and-so performs his ritual prayer *[idhā ṣallā fulān]*, I shall speak to him.' The meaning you intended to convey would be: 'I shall wait for him to perform his ritual prayer, and then, when he has finished praying, I shall speak to him.' You would not mean to suggest that you were going to speak to him while he was still performing his prayer! Well then, the same principle applies to the meaning intended by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), when he used the expression:

> When the prayer leader pronounces the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness, you must then pronounce the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[idhā kabbara 'l-imām fa-kabbirū]*.

"If the prayer leader *[imām]* lacks training in religious jurisprudence *[fiqh]*, he is all too likely to prolong the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*, while someone who utters it simultaneously with him *[yukabbiru ma'a-hu]* is all too likely to pronounce it abruptly, so that he finishes the *takbīr* before the leader has finished. The person concerned will thus become a proclaimer of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[mukabbir]* in advance of the prayer leader *[imām]*.

"If a member of the congregation pronounces the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness in advance of the prayer leader *[imām]*, he will not be credited with the performance of a ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. Since he has embarked upon the prayer in advance of the leader *[qabla 'l-imām]*, and has said: '*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]' before [the leader completed] the sentence *[qabla 'l-kalām]*, he does not have a ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* to his credit.

"Let us now move on to consider the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'When he pronounces the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness, and bows down, you must then pronounce the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness, and bow down *[idhā kabbara wa raka'a fa-kabbirū wa 'rka'ū]*

"This means that the members of the congregation must remain standing upright, as they wait for the prayer leader *[imām]* to say: '*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]' and adopt the bowing posture *[ḥattā yukabbira wa yarka'a]*, and that they must maintain their upright posture until the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. Then, and only then, should they follow him.

"Next comes the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'When he raises his head [from the bowing posture], and says:

May Allāh hear and accept the praise of one who praises Him!	*sami'a 'llāhu* *li-man ḥamidah.*

> —you must then raise your heads, and say:

O Allāh, our Lord, to You be the praise!'	*Allāhumma* *Rabba-nā la-ka 'l-ḥamd*

"This means that the members of the congregation must remain quite still in the bowing posture *[rukū']*, until the prayer leader *[imām]* raises his head, and says:

May Allāh hear and accept the praise of one who praises Him!	*sami'a 'llāhu* *li-man ḥamidah*

"They must maintain the bowing posture *[rukū']* until the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. Then, and only then, should they follow him, raising their heads and saying:

O Allāh, our Lord, to You be the praise!	*Allāhumma* *Rabba-nā la-ka 'l-ḥamd*

"Next comes the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'When he says "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]," and prostrates himself, you must then say "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]," and prostrate yourselves *[idhā kabbara wa sajada fa-kabbirū wa 'sjudū]*.

"This means that the members of the congregation must remain standing upright, while the prayer leader *[imām]* says: '*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!],' and sinks down into the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*. They must maintain their upright posture until he places his forehead on the ground. Then, and only then, should they follow him.

"This interpretation is confirmed by the traditional report, according to which it was al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said:

"'We used to pray behind the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and whenever he sank down from his upright posture [to perform the act of prostration], not one of us would bend his back until Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had placed his forehead on the ground.'

"Besides, all of this is fully in accordance with statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'The prayer leader *[imām]* bows down *[yarka'u]* before you do, prostrates himself *[yasjudu]* before you do, and raises his head before you do.'

"Let us now go on to consider the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'When he raises his head [from the posture of prostration] and says "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]," you must then raise your heads and say "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]" *[idhā ... kabbara ... fa- ... kabbirū]*.'

"This means that the members of the congregation must remain quite still in the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*, until the prayer leader *[imām]* raises his head, and says: "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]" They must maintain the posture of prostration *[sujūd]* until the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. Then, and only then, should they follow him, for at that point they must raise their heads.

"Finally, we must consider the terse statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'And so on, and so forth *[fa-tilka bi-tilka]*.'

"This is a way of saying that, as you now proceed to perform the second cycle *[rak'a]* of the ritual prayer *[salāt]*, you must observe each of these instructions at the appropriate stage. For instance:

"You must remain standing upright, as you wait for the prayer leader *[imām]* to say: '*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]' and adopt the bowing posture *[hattā yukabbira wa yarka'a]*, and you must maintain your upright posture until the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. Then, and only then, should you follow him.

"You must remain quite still in the bowing posture *[rukū']*, until the prayer leader *[imām]* raises his head, and says:

May Allāh hear and accept	*sami'a 'llāhu*
the praise of one who praises Him!	*li-man hamidah*.

"You must maintain the bowing posture *[rukū']* until the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. Then, and only then, should you follow him, raising your heads and saying:

Our Lord, to You be the praise!	*Rabba-nā la-ka 'l-hamd*.

"In other words, the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'And so on, and so forth *[fa-tilka bi-tilka]*.'

—is a succinct reference to every raising and lowering [of the head].

"This is all about perfecting the valid performance of the ritual prayer *[itmām aṣ-ṣalāt]*, so you must grasp it with your understanding, study it in depth, and master it thoroughly. You must realize that there will be many people, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, who have no ritual prayer *[salāt]* to their credit, due to their habit of anticipating the prayer leader *[imām]* in adopting the postures of bowing *[rukū']* and prostration *[sujūd]*, and in the raising and lowering [of the head]. In the words of the Prophetic tradition *[hadīth]*:

> There will come a time when people pray, yet do not perform the prayer *[yuṣallūna wa lā yuṣallūn]*.

"That time could well be this present age of ours, since people nowadays are generally in the habit of anticipating the prayer leader *[imām]*, and of failing to perform the basic essentials *[arkān]* of the ritual prayer *[salāt]*, not to mention their neglect of its necessary elements *[wājibāt]*, its recommended practices *[masnūnāt]*, and [other elements that contribute to] its complete refinement *[tamām]*."[291]

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[291] For lists of the basic essentials *[arkān]* of the ritual prayer *[salāt]*, its necessary practices *[wājibāt]*, recommended practices *[masnūnāt]*, and formal refinements *[hai'āt]*, see Vol. 1, pp. 13–16.

28.

Concerning what is required of someone who notices that another person is performing his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* incorrectly.

If someone happens to notice that another person is not performing his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* correctly, especially if he sees him omitting some of its basic essentials *[arkān]*[292] and necessary elements *[wājibāt]*,[293] as well as its customary refinements *[ādāb]*,[294] it is incumbent upon the observer to admonish him, to make him aware of his shortcomings, and to offer him sound advice, so that he may correct his mistakes from that time on, and seek forgiveness for those he has made in the past. If the observer fails to do this, he will be counted as a partner *[sharīk]* in the culprit's misconduct, and will thus be charged with the burden of the latter's guilt and sin.

As we are informed in the tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Woe betide the learned *['ālim]* on account of the ignorant *[jāhil]*, inasmuch as the former fails to teach the latter.

If it had not been the case that teaching the ignorant *[jāhil]* is incumbent upon the man of learning *['ālim]*, as a strict obligation and a prescribed religious duty, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would not have threatened him with woe, as the dire consequence of his failure to provide instruction. In order to deserve such a threat *[wa'īd]*, a person must be guilty of failing to carry out a duty that is strictly incumbent *[wājib]* and obligatory *[farḍ]*, as opposed to one that is merely voluntary and supererogatory *[nafl]*.

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[292] See note 291 on p. 216 above.

[293] See note 291 on p. 216 above.

[294] In this context, the term *ādāb* [good manners, proprieties] is obviously meant to cover those elements in the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* that are customary and highly recommended, though not absolutely essential to its validity.

Bilāl ibn Sa'd[295] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is traditionally reported as having said:

"As long as the sinful error remains concealed from public view, it causes harm to no one except the person who commits it. But once it becomes openly apparent, and if it does not get to be corrected, it causes harm to members of the community in general."

That is because of their failure to do their duty, which requires them to change the situation for the better, and to express their disapproval to the person whose sinful error has become so conspicuous, instead of saying nothing about it. As a result of their failure to speak out, the situation is bound to deteriorate still further, and the entire community becomes responsible for the unfortunate consequences. The virtuous individual *[muhsin]* is actually participating with the wrongdoer in his wrongdoing, as long as he fails to admonish him and offer him good advice."

As we learn from traditional sources, it was Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

"When someone happens to notice that another person is doing something wrong in the way he performs his ritual prayer *[salāt]*, but fails to warn him of the consequences, the observer is associating himself with the culprit as his partner in sin and shame, and he is serving as an accomplice of Satan the accursed *[ash-Shaitān al-la'īn]*."

That is because the Devil wants him to keep quiet and say nothing about the problem, and to refrain from engaging in mutual assistance toward piety *[birr]* and true devotion *[taqwā]*, the two virtues enjoined by Allāh (Exalted is He) in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And help one another to practice	*wa ta'āwanū 'ala 'l-birri*
piety and true devotion.	*wa 't-taqwā.*
And do not help one another	*wa lā ta'āwanū*
to practice sin and enmity,	*'ala 'l-ithmi*
and be careful	*wa 'l-'udwān:*
to observe your duty to Allāh;	*wa 'ttaqu 'llāh:*
surely Allāh is terrible	*Inna 'llāha*
in retribution. (5:2)	*Shadīdu'l-'iqāb.*

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[295] Bilāl ibn Sa'd Tamīm as-Sakūnī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the regular prayer leader *[imām]* at the Great Mosque of Damascus. He was renowned for his pious devotion, which is said to have been comparable to that of al-Hasan al-Basrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). He died in A.H. 122.

4.

Concerning the fact that the first two of the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* to be enjoined upon our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) were the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]* and the sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*.

The first two of the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* that were enjoined upon our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and that he was commanded to perform, were the dawn and sunset prayers *[ṣalāt al-fajr wa 'l-maghrib]*.

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) had made the pronouncement:

And extol the praise of your Lord	*wa sabbiḥ bi-ḥamdi Rabbi-ka*
in the evening and early	*bi'l-'ashiyyi*
in the morning. (40:55)	*wa 'l-ibkār.*

His Messenger therefore made it his regular practice (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to perform two cycles *[rak'atain]* of ritual prayer in the early morning *[ghadāh]* and two cycles in the evening *['ashiyy]*. This continued until the Night of the Heavenly Ascension *[Lailat al-Mi'rāj]*, the night when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was transported on his Heavenly Journey *[Isrā']*, at which point five daily prayers *[ṣalawāt]* were prescribed for him.

The dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]* is actually the first prayer of the daytime *[nahār]*, then comes the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*. It is customary, however, for the religious scholars *['ulamā']* to begin their listing and learned treatment of the prayers with the midday prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*. This custom is based on the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* reported by Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

> Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to visit me beside the House [the House of Allāh, the Ka'ba]. There he led me in the midday prayer *[ṣallā biya 'ẓ-ẓuhr]*, as soon as the sun had declined from the meridian, just enough to lengthen a shadow by the width of the strap of a sandal *[shirāk]*.[150]

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[150] See p. 114 above, where the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has already quoted this tradition *[ḥadīth]* in full.

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> The worst kind of thief is a person who steals from his own ritual prayer *[salāt]*

His listeners asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, how can a person steal from his own ritual prayer *[salāt]*?" So he explained (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> [He steals from it when] he does not perform its bowing *[rukū']* and its prostration *[sujūd]* correctly and completely.

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of al-Ḥasan al-Basrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Shall I tell you who is the worst kind of thief?

His listeners said: "Yes, of course, O Messenger of Allāh, do tell us who he is!" So he explained (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> He is someone who performs neither the bowing posture *[rukū']* of the ritual prayer *[salāt]*, nor its prostration *[sujūd]*, correctly and completely.

It was Salmān al-Fārisī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "The ritual prayer is a measure *[as-salātu mikyāl]*, so to one who performs it in full, the recompense will be paid in full. As for anyone who gives short measure, you know what Allāh (Exalted is He) has said about those who give short measure *[al-mutaffifīn]*!"[296]

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Alī, or 'Alī ibn Shaibān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who was a member of one of the deputations *[wafd]* that came to visit Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) [after the conquest of Mecca],[297] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Allāh takes no notice of the ritual prayer *[salāt]* performed by a servant [of His] who does not straighten his spine in his act of bowing *[rukū']* and his act of prostration *[sujūd]*

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[296] Salmān al-Fārisī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was alluding to Q. 83:1–9.

[297] In A.H. 9, after the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had gained possession of Mecca, Arab tribal deputations came to him from all directions.

Abū Huraira[196] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

"A man once came into the mosque *[masjid]*, while Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was sitting to one side of the place of worship, and proceeded to perform the ritual prayer *[fa-ṣallā]*. Then he came over to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and saluted him with the greeting of peace *[sallama 'alai-hi]*. The Messenger returned his greeting *[radda 'alai-hi 's-salām]*, and said: 'Now go back and pray *[ṣalli]*, for you have not yet performed the ritual prayer *[lam tuṣalli]*.' So the man performed the prayer as he had performed it the first time *[fa-ṣallā ka-mā ṣallā]*, then he came over and offered the greeting of peace *[sallama]*. Once again, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said to him: 'Now go back and pray *[ṣalli]*, for you have not yet performed the ritual prayer *[lam tuṣalli]*.' When he had done this three times, the man said: 'By Him who sent you to convey the Truth as a Prophet *[bi'l-Ḥaqqi Nabiyyan]*, if there is a better way [of performing the prayer] than this, please tell me what it is!'

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded to this by telling him:

> "'When you are ready to perform your ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, you must start by making a thorough job of the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']*. Then you must stand facing the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca], and proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh *[kabbir]*.[298] Then you must recite as much of the Qur'ān as you can manage with ease. Then you must bow down, so that you are calmly composed in the bowing posture *[ḥattā taṭma'inna rāki'an]*. Then you must straighten up, so that you assume a steady upright posture *[ḥattā ta'tadila qā'iman]*. Then you must prostrate yourself, so that you are calmly composed in the posture of prostration *[ḥattā taṭma'inna sājidan]*. Then you must sit up, so that you are are calmly composed in the sitting posture *[ḥattā taṭma'inna jālisan]*. Then you must prostrate yourself [a second time], so that you are calmly composed in the posture of prostration *[ḥattā taṭma'inna sājidan]*. Then you must sit up [again], so that you are are calmly composed in the sitting posture *[ḥattā taṭma'inna jālisan]*. Then you must do likewise at every stage in your performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.'"

According to another traditional account *[ḥadīth]*, Rifā'a ibn Rāfi'[299]

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[298] The word *kabbir* is the imperative form of the verb *kabbara* (see note 248 on p. 181 above).

[299] Abū Mu'ādh Rifā'a ibn Rāfi' ibn Mālik az-Zarqī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was a Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), from whom he related many traditions *[aḥādīth]*. He died in A.H. 41.

(may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

"While we were sitting in a circle around Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), a man came in [to the mosque], stood facing the *Qibla*, and proceeded to perform the ritual prayer *[fa-sallā]*. As soon as he had finished his ritual prayer *[salāt]*, he came over and offered the greeting of peace *[sallama]* to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and to the people in his company. Then Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told him: 'Now go back and pray *[salli]*, for you have not yet performed the ritual prayer *[lam tusalli]*.' He gave him this same instruction two or three times, so the man said: 'I am simply incapable of doing what you require of me, since I do not know what it is that you find lacking in my performance of the ritual prayer *[salāt]*!'

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded to this by saying:

> "'The ritual prayer *[salāt]* is not performed correctly and completely by any one of you, unless he starts by by making a thorough job of the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']*, as commanded by Allāh (Exalted is He). This means that he must wash his face, and his hands [and lower arms] up to the elbows, that he must rub his head [with his wet hands],[100] and that he must wash his feet up to the ankles.
>
> "'He must then proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh (Exalted is He) and extol Him *[yukabbiru 'llāha—ta'ālā—wa yaḥmadu-hu]*.
>
> "'Then he must recite as much of the Qur'ān as his knowledge of it permits.
>
> "'Then he must proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh *[yukabbiru]* and place the palms of his hands on his knees, so that his joints are comfortable and relaxed.
>
> "'Then he must say:
>
> May Allāh hear and accept　　*sami'a 'llāhu*
> the praise of one who praises Him!　　*li-man ḥamadah*
>
> —and assume an upright posture, so that his spine is straight and erect, and so that every member of his body is in its proper position.
>
> "'Then he must proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh *[yukabbiru]* and prostrate himself *[yasjudu]*, placing his forehead firmly on the ground, so that all his joints are comfortable and relaxed.
>
> "'Then he must proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh *[yukabbiru]*, sit evenly on his buttocks, and straighten his spine.'

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[100] As Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in Vol. 1, pp. 8–9, when listing the obligatory elements *[farā'iḍ]* of ritual purification:

Rubbing the head *[masḥ ar-ra's]*. The way to do this is by dipping the hands in water, then raising them [wet but] empty, placing them on the front part of the head, drawing them to the back of the head, then returning them to their original position.

"The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued in this vein, until he had described every stage of a ritual prayer *[salāt]* consisting of four cycles *[rakaʿāt]*. When he had finished, he added:

> "'The ritual prayer *[salāt]* is not performed correctly and completely by any one of you, unless and until he does it in the manner I have just described.'"

From this we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) insisted on the correct and complete performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, including the act of bowing *[rukūʿ]* and the act of prostration *[sujūd]*. He has let it be known, in fact, that the the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* will not be accepted unless it is duly performed in this manner. We also learn that it was out of the question for him (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to remain silent, when he noticed that the man was performing a defective version of the ritual prayer *[yuṣallī ṣalāt nāqiṣa]*.

If it had been permissible to postpone the explanation beyond the moment of need, and to refrain from rebuking the ignorant person and offering him instruction, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would surely have kept silent. He would have entrusted the handling of the situation to the discretion of the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* (may Allāh be well pleased with them all), and would have been content to let it pass without comment. Since he actually went to such great lengths in order to rebuke the man, and to provide him with instruction, he clearly meant to indicate the necessity of active intervention.

To those of his Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them) who were present with him on that occasion, it must have been obvious that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was exhorting them to take the same action he was taking, whenever they noticed someone doing the kind of thing that man was doing in the performance of his ritual prayer *[salāt]*. They must have realized that he expected them to instruct their own companions, and their companions' companions, concerning the nature and application of the rules of the Sacred Law *[kaifiyya aḥkām ash-Sharʿ]*, from then until the arrival of the final Hour *[as-Sāʿa]*.

29.

Concerning the qualifications of the muezzin [*mu'adhdhin*], and how he should act when giving the call to prayer [*adhān*] and the announcement that the prayer is about to begin [*iqāma*].

It is incumbent upon the muezzin [*mu'adhdhin*] to improve his elocution, to make sure that he does not commit any mispronunciation in the two declarations of faith [*shahādatain*].[301]

He must be thoroughly familiar with the times prescribed for the performance of the five obligatory daily prayers.

He must not give the call to prayer [*lā yu'adhdhinu*] until after the commencement of the period of time prescribed for a particular prayer, except in the case of the [prayer of] daybreak [*al-fajr*].[302]

In giving his call to prayer [*adhān*], he must count on obtaining the favor of Allāh (Exalted is He), and he must not accept any worldly remuneration for giving the call.

He must face the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca] while

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[301] The first declaration of faith [*shahāda*] is:

I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh.	*ashhadu an lā ilāha illa 'llāh.* *

The second declaration of faith [*shahāda*] is:

I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh.	*ashhadu anna Muhammadan Rasūlu 'llāh.* **

(* The final n-sound in *an* assimilates to the following l-sound, so that the actual pronunciation is "*al-lā ilāha* ..." ** The final n-sound in *Muhammadan* assimilates to the following r-sound, so that the actual pronunciation is "... *Muhammadar-rasūlu 'llāh*.")

[302] In the case of the dawn or daybreak prayer [*salāt as-subh* / *salāt al-fajr*], the call to prayer [*adhān*] may be given earlier, to allow people time to wake up and prepare themselves. As their authority for this solitary exception to the general rule, the religious scholars cite the saying of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Bilāl will give the call to prayer [*yu'adhdhinu*] while it is still nighttime, so you may eat and drink until Ibn Umm Maktūm gives the call [at daybreak].

(See: Imām Muwaffaq ad-Dīn 'Abdu'llāh ibn Ahmad ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *Al-'Umda fi fiqh Imām as-Sunna Ahmad ibn Hanbal ash-Shaibānī [radiya 'llāhu 'an-hu]*. Cairo, Egypt: Al-Maktabat as-Salafiyya, n.d.; p. 27.)

According to Ibrāhīm an-Nakha'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "The 'numbered days *[al-ayyām al-ma'dūdāt]*' are the Ten Days [of Dhu'l-Ḥijja], while the 'days appointed *[al-ayyām al-ma'lūmāt]*' are the Days of Immolation *[Ayyām an-Naḥr]*."

As for the context in which Allāh (Exalted is He) commanded the Muslims to practice remembrance *[dhikr]*, in this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* (2:203) and the one preceding it, in which He said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And when you have performed	*fa-idhā qaḍaitum manāsika-kum*
your holy rites, remember Allāh,	*fa-'dhkurū 'llāha*
as you remember your fathers	*ka-dhikri-kum*
or with a more intense remembrance.	*ābā'a-kum aw ashadda dhikrā.*
(2:200)	

—the traditional commentators *[mufassirūn]* have provided the following background information: When the [pre-Islāmic] Arabs had completed their Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, they used to stand by the House *[Bait]* and remember the exploits of their fathers and their glorious deeds. A man might say: "My father would always receive his guest with warm hospitality. He would always provide good food. He would sacrifice a camel fit for slaughter, and shear the forelocks [of other animals]. He would do such-and-such, and such-and-such." They used to compete with one another in making such boastful claims, so Allāh (Exalted is He) commanded His remembrance. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) sent down the revelation:

And when you have performed	*fa-idhā qaḍaitum manāsika-kum*
your holy rites, remember Allāh,	*fa-'dhkurū 'llāha*
as you remember your fathers	*ka-dhikri-kum*
or with a more intense remembrance.	*ābā'a-kum aw ashadda dhikrā.*
(2:200)	

—and so on, through to His words (Exalted is He):

And remember Allāh	*wa 'dhkurū 'llāha*
during certain numbered days.	*fī ayyāmin ma'dūdāt*
(2:203)	

He also said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

"So remember Me (2:152)	*fa-'dhkurū-nī*

—for I am the One who made that possible for your fathers, and for you. I am the One who treated them and you so well."

It is reprehensible on his part, that he should give the call to prayer [*an yu'adhdhina*] while he is in a state of major or minor ritual impurity [*junub aw muḥdith*].[105]

When he has finished pronouncing the *iqāma*, it is not appropriate for him to split the ranks [formed by the members of the congregation], in order to station himself in the first row.

Once he has delivered the call to prayer [*adhān*] from a particular spot, it is not appropriate for him to move to a different spot in order to pronounce the *iqāma*. This does not apply, however, if it would be difficult for him to do both in the same place. If he has given the call [*qad adhdhana*] from a minaret [*manāra*],[106] for instance, he should pronounce the *iqāma* in a spot that is suitable for performing the prayer [*ṣalāt*], or wherever is most convenient for him.

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[105] The term *junub* is applied to a man who is in a state of major ritual impurity, by reason of sexual intercourse and discharge of the semen, and who is therefore disqualified from performing a valid ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] until he has completed a total ablution [*ghusl*].

The term *muḥdith* is applied to a man who is in a state of minor ritual impurity, and who is therefore disqualified from performing a valid ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] until he has completed a lesser ablution [*wuḍū'*]. Causes of minor ritual impurity include the discharge of urine, fecal excrement, or wind, and the loss of consciousness (through normal sleep, as well as insanity and other abnormal states).

[106] The words *ma'dhana* and *mi'dhana*—derived from the same root, '-*dh*-*n*, as *adhān* [the call to prayer] and *mu'adhdhin* [muezzin, one who gives the call to prayer]—are also used in Arabic as synonyms for *manāra* [minaret].

30.

On the importance of approaching the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* with an attitude of true humility and complete dedication.

Allāh will surely bestow His mercy upon the worshipper who approaches his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* with an attitude of humility, meekness, and submissiveness toward Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), fearfully and attentively, eagerly and apprehensively, anxiously and hopefully. He feels that nothing is more important to him than performing his prayer *[ṣalāt]* for the sake of his Lord (Exalted is He), engaging in intimate converse *[munājāt]* with Him, and establishing himself in His presence, in the postures of standing *[qāʾim]* and sitting *[qāʿid]*, and in the acts of bowing *[rākiʿ]* and prostration *[sājid]*. In order to commit himself to this completely, he empties his heart and mind of their concerns. He makes a dedicated effort to fulfill his obligatory duties *[farāʾiḍ]*, for he does not know whether he will be able to perform another ritual prayer *[hal yuṣallī ṣalāt]*, after the one in which he is currently engaged, or whether his demise *[wafāt]* will suddenly overtake him, before that opportunity can arise. So he stands in the presence of his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), melancholy and apprehensive, hoping that his performance will be accepted, and fearing its rejection. If He accepts it, he will experience blissful happiness, and if He rejects it, he will suffer painful distress.

How much is therefore at stake where you are concerned, O believer *[muʾmin]* endowed with the radiant lights of Islām, in this ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* and in the other components of your religious practice *[ʿamal]*! All the more reason why you should approach it, as well as all those other duties, with an attitude of anxiety, despondency, timidity and apprehension.

As part of what He has prescribed for you, Allāh (Exalted is He) has decreed that you may never know whether or not a ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, or any good deed, has been accepted of you, and that you may never know whether or not you have been forgiven for committing a bad deed. Yet there you go, laughing and making merry, heedlessly immersed in the pleasures of worldly life! I wonder how you can be so free of care, in light of the certain knowledge *[yaqīn]*, which has come from an Informant who is Truthful and Trustworthy *[Mukhbir Ṣādiq Amīn]*, that you are heading toward the Fire of Hell. For He has said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

And there is not one of you	*wa in min-kum*
but shall go down to it	*illā wāridu-hā:*
[the Fire of Hell];	
that, for your Lord,	*kāna ʿalā Rabbi-ka*
is a thing decreed, determined.	*ḥatman maqḍiyyā*
(19:71)	

What you have not received is the certain knowledge *[yaqīn]* that you will also emerge from it! For whom, therefore, is a prolonged state of lamentation and sorrow more suitable than for you, until Allāh sees fit to accept your offering?

Even then, you will not know exactly what lies in store for you. When evening falls, will you live to see the break of day? You may see the dawn, but will you still be alive when the evening comes around? Will you be greeted with tidings of the Garden of Paradise, or with tidings of the Fire of Hell? You have very good reason, therefore, to be less than completely happy with a wife, a child, or a piece of property.

Nothing could be more utterly astounding than the extent of your heedlessness, and the extent of your indifference to this enormously important matter. You are being driven toward your destination at a rapid pace, every day and every night, with every hour and with every twinkling of an eye, so you must prepare yourself for imminent arrival at your appointed term *[ajal]*. You must not continue to be heedless of this mighty peril that hangs over you like a shadow, for you are bound to experience death, and your encounter with it is inevitable; it may alight in your personal space tomorrow morning or tomorrow night. You must dispose of your worldly interests, for you will soon be extracted from all of that, and dispossessed of it completely. Whether you are bound for the Garden of Paradise or for the Fire of Hell, those interests will cease to be of any relevance whatsoever.

Especially in the case of the Fire of Hell, verbal explanations and stories fall far short of describing the reality of its nature, of imparting a true understanding of its size and scope and the variety of its torments, and of communicating the full extent of what it represents.

Al-'Abd as-Ṣāliḥ [the Righteous Servant] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said:

"Where the Fire of Hell is concerned, I find it astonishing that someone who is supposed to be fleeing from it can fall asleep, and as for the Garden of Paradise, I find it astonishing that someone who is supposed to be seeking it can fall asleep."

By Allāh, if you ever withdraw from the flight from the one, and the quest for the other, you will surely be doomed to manifest disaster. Great will be your agony, and prolonged will be your grief and lamentation, tomorrow [at the Resurrection] in the company of those miserable wretches who are condemned to suffer painful torment.

If, on the other hand, you are determined to be a refugee [from the Fire of Hell] and a seeker [of the Garden of Paradise], you must on no account allow yourself to be misled by entertaining fanciful desires, or by taking pride in the signs of grace with which you are endowed. You must make a truly earnest commitment and a truly dedicated effort. You must be on your guard against the lower self *[nafs]* and the Devil *[Shaiṭān]*, for each of them exerts a subtle influence, each of them poses a serious threat, and each of them is capable of wicked tricks and ruses. You must also be on your guard against this world, so that it does not captivate you with its charm, and so that it does not deceive you with vanities, its falsehood, its opulence and its glamorous appeal.

In the words of the tradition *[ḥadīth]* that has come down to us from the Chief of Mankind *[Sayyid al-Bashar]*:[107]

> This world is ever deceiving, fickle, and harmful.[108]

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

O mankind, be careful to observe	*yā ayyuha 'n-nāsu 'ttaqū*
your duty to your Lord,	*Rabba-kum*
and dread a day	*wa 'khshaw yauman*
when no parent shall give	*lā yajzī wālidun*
satisfaction on his child's behalf,	*'an waladi-hi*
and no child shall	*wa lā maulūdun*
give any satisfaction whatsoever	*huwa jāzin 'an wālidi-hi shai'ā.*

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[107] That is to say, from Allāh's Messenger, the Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[108] *inna 'd-dunyā taghurru wa taḍurru wa tamurru.*

for his parent. Allāh's promise is true	*inna wa'da 'llāhi ḥaqqun fa-lā*
indeed, so do not let	*taghurranna-kumu 'l-*
the life of this world delude you,	*ḥayātu 'd-dunyā:*
and do not let the Deceiver	*wa lā yaghurranna-kum*
deceive you in regard to Allāh.	*bi-'llāhi 'l-gharūr.*
(31:33)	

The Deceiver *[al-Gharūr]*[109] is none other than Satan the accursed *[ash-Shaiṭān ar-rajīm]*. [From him we take refuge with] Allāh, Allāh, and then again Allāh!

You must be on your guard against the pitfalls that lead to perdition and ruination. You must faithfully observe the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, as well as all the other commandments, and you must beware of infringing any of the prohibitions [imposed by the Sacred Law]. You must refrain from sinful behavior, in private as well as in public. You must surrender to your Lord, by accepting with resignation whatever has been destined for you and for other people. You must submit to your Lord, through obedience to Him in whatever He commands or forbids you to do. You must not distance yourself from Him, by committing that which he has forbidden you to perpetrate. You must not incur His displeasure, by remonstrating with Him against the course He has prepared for you, and by refusing to be satisfied with what He has allotted to you in the form of worldly goods and means of livelihood, and with the actions He has taken for your sake. He has hidden from you some of the benefits that will eventually accrue from those actions, and He has concealed from you their ultimate consequences, but some of their finest fruits and beneficial results will soon become apparent to you.

He has said (More Glorious is He than any other sayer):

But it may happen that you hate	*wa 'asā an takrahū shai'an*
a thing that is good for you,	*wa huwa khairun la-kum*
and it may happen that you love	*wa 'asā an tuḥibbū shai'an*
a thing which is bad for you.	*wa huwa sharrun la-kum*
Allāh knows,	*wa 'llāhu ya'lamu*
and you know not. (2:216)	*wa antum lā ta'lamūn.*

You must always be obedient to your Master *[Maulā]*, content with His verdict, patient in the face of His trials and tribulations, grateful for

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[109] Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has also mentioned the Deceiver *[al-Gharūr]* in the following verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān:

And wishful expectations beguiled you	*wa gharrat-kumu 'l-amāniyyu*
until the ordinance of Allāh came to pass,	*ḥattā jā'a amru 'llāhi*
and the Deceiver deceived you	*wa gharra-kum*
concerning Allāh. (57:14)	*bi'llāhi 'l-Gharūr.*

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> The worst kind of thief is a person who steals from his own ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*

His listeners asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, how can a person steal from his own ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*?" So he explained (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> [He steals from it when] he does not perform its bowing *[rukū']* and its prostration *[sujūd]* correctly and completely.

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Shall I tell you who is the worst kind of thief?

His listeners said: "Yes, of course, O Messenger of Allāh, do tell us who he is!" So he explained (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> He is someone who performs neither the bowing posture *[rukū']* of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, nor its prostration *[sujūd]*, correctly and completely.

It was Salmān al-Fārisī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "The ritual prayer is a measure *[aṣ-ṣalātu mikyāl]*, so to one who performs it in full, the recompense will be paid in full. As for anyone who gives short measure, you know what Allāh (Exalted is He) has said about those who give short measure *[al-muṭaffifīn]*!"[296]

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Alī, or 'Alī ibn Shaibān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who was a member of one of the deputations *[wafd]* that came to visit Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) [after the conquest of Mecca],[297] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Allāh takes no notice of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* performed by a servant [of His] who does not straighten his spine in his act of bowing *[rukū']* and his act of prostration *[sujūd]*

[296] Salmān al-Fārisī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was alluding to Q. 83:1–9.

[297] In A.H. 9, after the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had gained possession of Mecca, Arab tribal deputations came to him from all directions.

31.

Concerning the ritual prayer of the spiritual élite *[ṣalāt al-khāṣṣa]*.

As for the ritual prayer of the spiritual élite *[ṣalāt al-khāṣṣa]*, it serves to alert the wakeful, the humbly submissive, the vigilant, the guardians of hearts, the welcome guests of the All-Merciful *[ar-Raḥmān]* (may they enjoy the good pleasure of Allāh, and may His peace be upon them all). A good description of it is related in the following report:

Yūsuf ibn ʿIṣām was passing through one of the large congregational mosques *[jāmiʿ min jawāmiʿ]* of Khurāsān, when he came across an enormous circle *[ḥalqa]* of people. He stopped to ask someone about it, and he was told: "That is the circle of Ḥātim. He is speaking on the subjects of abstinence *[zuhd]* and pious caution *[waraʿ]*, and about fear and hope."

Yūsuf then turned to his companions and said: "Come on, let us ask him a question on the subject of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*! Then, if he gives us a satisfying answer, we shall sit with him and join his circle." He thereupon went up to Ḥātim, saluted him with the greeting of peace *[sallama ʿalai-hi]*, and said: "May Allāh bestow His mercy upon you *[raḥima-ka 'llāh]*! I have a question I wish to put to you." "Go ahead and ask it," said Ḥātim, and the following conversation then took place between the two of them:

Yūsuf said: "I wish to ask you about the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*."

Ḥātim said: "Do you wish to ask me about its significance as a spiritual experience *[maʿrifa]*, or about the discipline *[adab]* to be observed in its performance? There are two distinct questions here, requiring two separate answers."

Yūsuf said: "In that case, let me ask you about the discipline *[adab]* to be observed in its performance."

Ḥātim said: "It means that you rise to the occasion, and walk [to the place of worship] with an attitude of total dedication *[iḥtisāb]*. It means

Bilāl ibn Sa'd[295] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is traditionally reported as having said:

"As long as the sinful error remains concealed from public view, it causes harm to no one except the person who commits it. But once it becomes openly apparent, and if it does not get to be corrected, it causes harm to members of the community in general."

That is because of their failure to do their duty, which requires them to change the situation for the better, and to express their disapproval to the person whose sinful error has become so conspicuous, instead of saying nothing about it. As a result of their failure to speak out, the situation is bound to deteriorate still further, and the entire community becomes responsible for the unfortunate consequences. The virtuous individual *[muhsin]* is actually participating with the wrongdoer in his wrongdoing, as long as he fails to admonish him and offer him good advice."

As we learn from traditional sources, it was Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

"When someone happens to notice that another person is doing something wrong in the way he performs his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, but fails to warn him of the consequences, the observer is associating himself with the culprit as his partner in sin and shame, and he is serving as an accomplice of Satan the accursed *[ash-Shaiṭān al-la'īn]*."

That is because the Devil wants him to keep quiet and say nothing about the problem, and to refrain from engaging in mutual assistance toward piety *[birr]* and true devotion *[taqwā]*, the two virtues enjoined by Allāh (Exalted is He) in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And help one another to practice	*wa ta'āwanū 'ala 'l-birri*
piety and true devotion.	*wa 't-taqwā.*
And do not help one another	*wa lā ta'āwanū*
to practice sin and enmity,	*'ala 'l-ithmi*
and be careful	*wa 'l-'udwān:*
to observe your duty to Allāh;	*wa 'ttaqu 'llāh:*
surely Allāh is terrible	*Inna 'llāha*
in retribution. (5:2)	*Shadīdu'l-'iqāb.*

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[295] Bilāl ibn Sa'd Tamīm as-Sakūnī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the regular prayer leader *[imām]* at the Great Mosque of Damascus. He was renowned for his pious devotion, which is said to have been comparable to that of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). He died in A.H. 122.

as well as with the customary observances *[ma 'stanna]* established by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)?'"

"'O Abū Ḥāzim,' he then said to me, 'what is required of you, as an obligatory duty *[farḍ]*, before you stand ready to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*?'"

"'There are six requirements,' I replied.

"'What are they?' he asked.

"I said: 'They are (1) a state of ritual purity *[ṭahāra]*, (2) covering oneself [to conceal the private parts] *[istitār]*, (3) choosing a suitable spot on which to perform the prayer *[ikhtiyār mauḍiʿ aṣ-ṣalāt]*, (4) standing ready to perform the prayer *[al-qiyām ila 'ṣ-ṣalāt]*, (5) formulating the intention *[niyya]*, and (6) facing toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Kaʿba in Mecca].'

"'O Abū Ḥāzim,' he asked me next, 'with what intention *[niyya]* do you set out from your house toward the mosque *[masjid]*?'

"I said: 'With the intention to visit [the place of worship] *[bi-niyyat az-ziyāra]*.'

"He said: 'With what intention *[niyya]* do you enter the mosque *[masjid]*?'

"I said: 'With the intention to perform an act of worship *[bi-niyyat al-ʿibāda]*.'

"He said: 'With what intention *[niyya]* do you stand ready to perform the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*?'

"I said: 'With the intention of servitude *[bi-niyyat al-ʿubūdiyya]*, acknowledging the state of servitude to Him.'"

Abū Ḥāzim (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) then continued his account of his conversation with the Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

"He came closer to me, and said: 'O Abū Ḥāzim, with what do you confront the *Qibla?*'

"I said: 'With three obligatory observances *[farāʾiḍ]* and one customary practice *[sunna]*.'

"He said: 'And what are they?'

"I said: 'Facing toward the *Qibla* is an obligatory observance *[farḍ]*. Formulating the intention *[niyya]* is an obligatory observance *[farḍ]*. The initial declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[at-takbīrat al-ūlā]*[1] is also an obligatory observance *[farḍ]*. The act of raising the hands[112] is a customary practice *[sunna]*.'

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[1] This initial declaration—"*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great']"—is often called the consecratory declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīrat al-iḥrām]*.

"He said: 'In how many instances is pronouncing the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]* required of you as an obligatory observance *[farḍ]*, and how often as a customary practice *[sunna]*?'

"I said: 'The basic principle of *takbīr* [the affirmation of the Supreme Greatness of Allāh] is expressed through ninety-four *takbīra*'s [utterances of the declaration: "*Allāhu Akbar* (Allāh is Supremely Great!)"]. Five of these are strictly obligatory *[farḍ]*, while all the rest of them are customary *[sunna]*.'

"He said: 'With what do you mark the opening of the ritual prayer *[bi-mā tastaftiḥu 'ṣ-ṣalāt]*?'

"I said: 'With the affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[bi't-takbīr]*.'

"He said: 'And what [element of the prayer] is its manifest proof *[burhān]*?'

"I said: 'Its Qur'ānic recitation *[qirā'a]*.'

"He said: 'And what is its jewel, its very essence *[jauhar]*?'

"I said: 'Its glorification [of the Lord] *[tasbīḥ]*.'

"He said: 'And what is its animation *[iḥyā']*?'

"I said: 'Its humble submission *[khushū']*.'

"He said: 'And what is its humble submission *[khushū']*?'

"I said: 'Fixing one's gaze on the spot where the act of prostration *[sujūd]* is to be performed.'

"He said: 'And what is its solemn dignity *[waqār]*?'

"I said: 'Its state of calm tranquillity *[sukūn]*.'

"He said: 'And what is its consecration *[taḥrīm]*?'

"I said: 'The [initial] declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*.'

"He said: 'And what is its deconsecration *[taḥlīl]*?'

"I said: 'The [concluding] salutation *[taslīm]*.'

"He said: 'And what is its emblem *[shi'ār]*?'

"I said: 'The glorification [of the Lord] *[tasbīḥ]* when its performance has been duly completed.'

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[112] See Vol. 1, p. 15, where Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained:

> This means that one's hands are brought up close to the shoulders, the thumbs are held beside the lobes of the ears, and the tips of the fingers next to upper parts of the ears. Then the hands are lowered again.

Bilāl ibn Sa'd[295] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is traditionally reported as having said:

"As long as the sinful error remains concealed from public view, it causes harm to no one except the person who commits it. But once it becomes openly apparent, and if it does not get to be corrected, it causes harm to members of the community in general."

That is because of their failure to do their duty, which requires them to change the situation for the better, and to express their disapproval to the person whose sinful error has become so conspicuous, instead of saying nothing about it. As a result of their failure to speak out, the situation is bound to deteriorate still further, and the entire community becomes responsible for the unfortunate consequences. The virtuous individual *[muḥsin]* is actually participating with the wrongdoer in his wrongdoing, as long as he fails to admonish him and offer him good advice."

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“He said: ‘And by what means did you acquire intelligence *[‘aql]*?”

“I said: ‘There are two kinds of intelligence *[al-‘aql ‘aqlān]*. For the making of one kind of intelligence, Allāh is solely responsible, to the exclusion of His creatures. The other kind of intelligence is one that human beings can develop, through the discipline of training and education. When the two kinds are combined together as a team, each of them assists and supports the other.’

“He said: ‘And by what means did you accomplish all of that?”

“I said: ‘Through the enabling grace [of Allāh] *[taufīq]*. May Allāh enable us, and you, to succeed in achieving that which is worthy of love and approval.’

“Then he said: ‘By Allāh, you have already perfected the keys to the Garden of Paradise! So let me hear your answers to the following questions: (1) What is the obligatory duty *[farḍ]* that you must perform? (2) What is the obligatory duty of the obligatory duty *[farḍ al-farḍ]*? (3) What is an obligatory duty that leads to an obligatory duty *[farḍ yu’addī ilā farḍ]*? (4) What is the customary practice *[sunna]* that is included within the obligatory duty *[farḍ]*? (5) What is a customary practice *[sunna]* by which the obligatory duty *[farḍ]* is completed?

“I answered his questions as follows: ‘(1) As for the obligatory duty *[farḍ]*, that is the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. (2) As for the obligatory duty of the obligatory duty *[farḍ al-farḍ]*, that is the state of ritual purity *[ṭahāra]*. (3) As for an obligatory duty that leads to an obligatory duty *[farḍ yu’addī ilā farḍ]*, that refers to your taking water in your right hand, and using it to wash your left hand. (4) As for the customary practice *[sunna]* that is included within the obligatory duty *[farḍ]*, that refers to your making water flow between your fingers and toes [when performing the ritual ablution]. (5) As for a customary practice *[sunna]* by which the obligatory duty *[farḍ]* is completed, that is circumcision *[khitān]*.’

“He said: ‘You have not left yourself vulnerable to any charge that might be brought against you, O Abū Ḥāzim! Now let me ask you this: ‘How many duties, obligatory *[farḍ]* and customary *[sunna]*, are you required to observe in connection with the consumption of food?”

“I said: ‘Are there obligatory and customary observances *[farḍ wa sunna]* connected with the consumption of food?”

“He said: ‘Yes, there are. Four of them are obligatory *[farḍ]*, four are customary *[sunna]*, and four are acts of courtesy *[makruma]*.

for his parent. Allāh's promise is true	*inna wa'da 'llāhi ḥaqqun fa-lā*
indeed, so do not let	*taghurranna-kumu 'l-*
the life of this world delude you,	*ḥayātu 'd-dunyā:*
and do not let the Deceiver	*wa lā yaghurranna-kum*
deceive you in regard to Allāh.	*bi-'llāhi 'l-gharūr.*
(31:33)	

The Deceiver *[al-Gharūr]*[109] is none other than Satan the accursed *[ash-Shaiṭān ar-rajīm]*. [From him we take refuge with] Allāh, Allāh, and then again Allāh!

You must be on your guard against the pitfalls that lead to perdition and ruination. You must faithfully observe the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, as well as all the other commandments, and you must beware of infringing any of the prohibitions [imposed by the Sacred Law]. You must refrain from sinful behavior, in private as well as in public. You must surrender to your Lord, by accepting with resignation whatever has been destined for you and for other people. You must submit to your Lord, through obedience to Him in whatever He commands or forbids you to do. You must not distance yourself from Him, by committing that which he has forbidden you to perpetrate. You must not incur His displeasure, by remonstrating with Him against the course He has prepared for you, and by refusing to be satisfied with what He has allotted to you in the form of worldly goods and means of livelihood, and with the actions He has taken for your sake. He has hidden from you some of the benefits that will eventually accrue from those actions, and He has concealed from you their ultimate consequences, but some of their finest fruits and beneficial results will soon become apparent to you.

He has said (More Glorious is He than any other sayer):

But it may happen that you hate	*wa 'asā an takrahū shai'an*
a thing that is good for you,	*wa huwa khairun la-kum*
and it may happen that you love	*wa 'asā an tuḥibbū shai'an*
a thing which is bad for you.	*wa huwa sharrun la-kum*
Allāh knows,	*wa 'llāhu ya'lamu*
and you know not. (2:216)	*wa antum lā ta'lamūn.*

You must always be obedient to your Master *[Maulā]*, content with His verdict, patient in the face of His trials and tribulations, grateful for

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[109] Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has also mentioned the Deceiver *[al-Gharūr]* in the following verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān:

And wishful expectations beguiled you	*wa gharratkumu 'l-amāniyyu*
until the ordinance of Allāh came to pass,	*ḥattā jā'a amru 'llāhi*
and the Deceiver deceived you	*wa gharrakum*
concerning Allāh. (57:14)	*bi'llāhi 'l-Gharūr.*

According to Ibrāhīm an-Nakha'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "The 'numbered days *[al-ayyām al-ma'dūdāt]*' are the Ten Days [of Dhu'l-Ḥijja], while the 'days appointed *[al-ayyām al-ma'lūmāt]*' are the Days of Immolation *[Ayyām an-Naḥr]*."

As for the context in which Allāh (Exalted is He) commanded the Muslims to practice remembrance *[dhikr]*, in this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* (2:203) and the one preceding it, in which He said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And when you have performed	*fa-idhā qaḍaitum manāsika-kum*
your holy rites, remember Allāh,	*fa-'dhkurū 'llāha*
as you remember your fathers	*ka-dhikri-kum*
or with a more intense remembrance.	*ābā'a-kum au ashadda dhikrā.*
(2:200)	

—the traditional commentators *[mufassirūn]* have provided the following background information: When the [pre-Islāmic] Arabs had completed their Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, they used to stand by the House *[Bait]* and remember the exploits of their fathers and their glorious deeds. A man might say: "My father would always receive his guest with warm hospitality. He would always provide good food. He would sacrifice a camel fit for slaughter, and shear the forelocks [of other animals]. He would do such-and-such, and such-and-such." They used to compete with one another in making such boastful claims, so Allāh (Exalted is He) commanded His remembrance. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) sent down the revelation:

And when you have performed	*fa-idhā qaḍaitum manāsika-kum*
your holy rites, remember Allāh,	*fa-'dhkurū 'llāha*
as you remember your fathers	*ka-dhikri-kum*
or with a more intense remembrance.	*ābā'a-kum au ashadda dhikrā.*
(2:200)	

—and so on, through to His words (Exalted is He):

And remember Allāh	*wa 'dhkurū 'llāha*
during certain numbered days.	*fī ayyāmin ma'dūdāt*
(2:203)	

He also said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

"So remember Me (2:152)	*fa-'dhkurū-nī*

—for I am the One who made that possible for your fathers, and for you. I am the One who treated them and you so well."

1.
Concerning the ritual prayer of the Friday congregation *[ṣalāt al-jum'a]*.

As for the ritual prayer of the Friday congregation *[ṣalāt al-jum'a]*, the necessity *[wujūb]*[114] of its performance is based on the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

O you who believe! When the call	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanū*
is proclaimed for the prayer	*idhā nūdiya li'ṣ-ṣalāti*
on the Day of Congregation,	*min yawmi 'l-jumu'ati*
hasten to the remembrance of Allāh	*fa-'s'au ilā dhikri 'llāhi*
and leave trading aside.	*wa dharu 'l-bai'*:
That is better for you,	*dhālikum khairun la-kum*
if you did but know. (62:9)	*in kuntum ta'lamūn*.

It is also based on the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If someone fails to attend the Friday congregation *[jum'a]* on three [consecutive] occasions, without having a valid excuse to offer, Allāh will stamp a seal on his heart.

The duty to attend the Friday congregational prayer *[fard al-jum'a]* is incumbent, therefore, upon every individual for whom the five daily prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]*[115] are obligatory—provided that he is a permanent local resident *[mustawṭin]*, settled in a town or in a rural community *[qarya jāmi'a]*, in which there is a population of at least forty legally mature males, all of whom must be of sound mind, and all of whom must be free men.

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[114] The noun *wujūb* corresponds to the adjectival form *wājib*, which is applied—as a technical term of Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]*—to a religious duty that is "necessary," but which cannot be classed as "absolutely obligatory" *[fard]*.

[115] Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has devoted an earlier Chapter to the subject of the five daily prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]*. (See pp. 110–238.)

If he resides in a village or settlement in which there are fewer than forty men, and his situation is such that he can hear the call [*nidāʾ*] from another village, or a town or city, from which he is separated by the distance of a league [*farsakh*],[116] it is incumbent upon him to go there.

It is not permissible for him to absent himself from it [the Friday congregational prayer], unless he has a valid excuse. Under certain circumstances, he will be excused for failing to attend, not only this, but also the congregational performance of all other [prescribed] prayers [*ṣalawāt*]. This exemption will apply in cases like the following:

1. He is sick.
2. He has reason to fear the loss or destruction of some property of his.
3. He has reason to fear the death or disappearance of a close relative.
4. His freedom of movement is restricted by a serious problem connected with the bladder and the bowel, or one of the two.
5. A meal has been prepared for him, and he is urgently in need of it.
6. He has reason to fear being arrested by a worldly authority, or being grabbed by a creditor who is constantly harassing him, when he has nothing on him to give the man.
7. He is getting ready to travel, and is afraid of missing his caravan.
8. He is afraid of damage to his property, or hopes to locate its whereabouts by staying away from the Friday congregation [*jumʿa*], as well as other congregational attendance [*jamāʿa*].
9. Sleepiness [*nuʿās*] overwhelms him, so that he misses the prescribed time.
10. He is afraid of being badly affected by the rain, the mud, and the strong wind.

The Friday congregational prayer [*ṣalāt al-jumʿa*] consists of two cycles [*rakʿatān*], performed after the sermon [*khuṭba*][117] and together with the prayer leader [*imām*]. If someone misses it, he must perform a noon prayer [*ẓuhr*] of four cycles.[118] He may do this either by himself, if he so wishes, or as a member of a congregational group.

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[116] The *farsakh* [parasang, or league] is three miles of the Hāshimī measure, i.e. thirty bow-shots reckoning the bow-shot as four hundred cubits, or sixty bow-shots reckoning the bow shot as two hundred cubits. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *F-R-S-KH*.)

[117] Since this sermon is delivered in two parts, it is sometimes referred to as "the two sermons [*al-khuṭbatān*]." (See, for instance, p. 242 below.)

[118] The regular noon prayer [*ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr*], which is one of the five prescribed prayers [*aṣ-ṣalāt al-khams*] on the other days of the week, is replaced on a Friday by the congregational prayer [*ṣalāt al-jumʿa*]—except, as noted here, for those who fail to attend the latter.

The appropriate time for it is before the sun's decline from the meridian, coinciding with the time when the ritual prayer of the Festival [*ṣalāt al-ʿĪd*] is performed. According to some of our fellow [Ḥanbalī] scholars, [it should be performed] in the fifth hour [of daylight].

One prerequisite, without which it cannot be convened, is the presence of forty men, from among those on whom it is incumbent to perform the Friday congregational prayer [*al-jumʿa*].[119] (According to one reported version [of the Ḥanbalī doctrine], the required number is fifty, and according to another it is only thirty.)

In the course of its performance, it is customary[120] to pronounce the Qurʾānic recitation in an audible voice [*jahr*]. It is also customary for that recitation to consist of the Sūra of the Congregation [*Sūrat al-Jumuʿa*][121] —after the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*]—in the first cycle, and the Sūra of the Hypocrites [*Sūrat al-Munāfiqīn*][122] in the second cycle.

Is it necessary to obtain official authorization [*idhn al-imām*]? On this point, there are two [conflicting] accounts of the [Ḥanbalī] doctrine.

One of the preconditions for the valid performance of the Friday congregational prayer [*ṣalāt al-jumʿa*] is that it must be preceded by the two sermons [*al-khuṭbatān*].

It has no customary ritual prayer [*sunna*] to precede it. As for the one that may be performed afterwards, it should consist of at least two cycles [*rakʿatān*], and of six cycles at the very most. There is a tradition [*ḥadīth*] to this effect, reported by some of the Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them all), who attribute it to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). According to a certain scholar, however, one of those well versed in the knowledge of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), the recommended practice is to perform twelve cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer in advance of the Friday congregational prayer [*ṣalāt al-jumʿa*], and six cycles after it.

[119] That is to say, they must be legally mature, of sound mind, and free men.

[120] By "customary" we mean following the exemplary custom [Sunna in Arabic] of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[121] The Sūra of the Congregation [*Sūrat al-Jumuʿa*] takes its title from the verse [*āya*] quoted at the beginning of this Chapter (p. 240 above).

[122] The Sūra entitled "The Hypocrites" [*Sūrat al-Munāfiqīn*] is the 63rd Sūra of the Qurʾān.

As soon as the call to prayer *[adhān]* has been delivered beside the pulpit *[minbar]*, everyone must desist from buying and selling, in accordance with the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

O you who believe! When the call	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanū*
is proclaimed for the prayer	*idhā nūdiya li'ṣ-ṣalāti*
on the Day of Congregation,	*min yaumi 'l-jumu'ati*
hasten to the remembrance of Allāh	*fa-'s'au ilā dhikri 'llāhi*
and leave trading aside. (62:9)	*wa dharu 'l-bai'* :

This is a reference to the call to prayer *[adhān]* as it was delivered [beside the pulpit] in the lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). It is necessary *[wājib]*[123] according to our understanding of the [Ḥanbalī] doctrine, while others maintain that it is a collective duty *[fard 'ala 'l-kifāya]*.[124] He [Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal] is also reported as having declared it a customary practice *[sunna]*.

As for the call to prayer delivered from the minaret *[adhān al-manāra]*,[125] it was ordained by 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) during his time [as Caliph],[126] as a measure to promote the public interest *[li-maṣlaḥa 'āmma]*, its purpose being to

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[123] In the technical vocabulary of Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]*, the term *wājib* is applied to a religious duty that is "necessary," but which cannot be classed as "absolutely obligatory" *[fard]*.

[124] In Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]*, a distinction is drawn between *fard 'ain*, i.e., a religious duty that is incumbent on every individual Muslim, and *fard 'ala 'l-kifāya*, meaning a collective duty, incumbent on the Islāmic community as a whole, though not on every individual Muslim. As Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has pointed out in an earlier Chapter of the present work, duties classed as *fard 'ain* include the obligation to acquire knowledge of the rules governing the five fundamentals or "pillars," namely, the profession of faith *[shahāda]*, the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, the alms-due *[zakāt]*, fasting *[ṣawm]* during the month of Ramaḍān, and the pilgrimage *[hajj]*. There is also an obligation to study subjects that go beyond these fundamentals, but the pursuit of "higher learning" is an example of a collective duty *[fard 'ala 'l-kifāya]*, which can be discharged by qualified experts on behalf of the community as a whole. (See Vol. 1, n. 63, p. 87.)

[125] The words *ma'dhana* and *mi'dhana*—derived from the same root, *'-dh-n*, as *adhān* [the call to prayer] and *mu'adhdhin* [muezzin, one who gives the call to prayer]—are also used in Arabic as synonyms for *manāra* [minaret].

[126] The Caliphate *[Khilāfa]* of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) began in A.H. 23/643 C.E., when he succeeded 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) as Commander of the Believers [Amīr al-Mu'minīn], and ended when he was assassinated in A.H. 35/656 C.E., at the age of eighty-two. He is often referred to as Dhu 'n-Nūrain [He of the Two Lights], in honor of the fact that he married two daughters of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace): first Ruqayya, then, after her death, which occurred during the Battle of Badr, her sister Umm Kulthūm (may Allāh be well pleased with them).

Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has described his succession to the Caliphate in an earlier Chapter of the present work. (See Vol. 1, pp. 261-62.)

(may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

"While we were sitting in a circle around Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), a man came in [to the mosque], stood facing the *Qibla*, and proceeded to perform the ritual prayer [*fa-sallā*]. As soon as he had finished his ritual prayer [*salāt*], he came over and offered the greeting of peace [*sallama*] to Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and to the people in his company. Then Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told him: 'Now go back and pray [*salli*], for you have not yet performed the ritual prayer [*lam tusalli*].' He gave him this same instruction two or three times, so the man said: 'I am simply incapable of doing what you require of me, since I do not know what it is that you find lacking in my performance of the ritual prayer [*salāt*]!'

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded to this by saying:

> "'The ritual prayer [*salāt*] is not performed correctly and completely by any one of you, unless he starts by by making a thorough job of the ritual ablution [*wudū'*], as commanded by Allāh (Exalted is He). This means that he must wash his face, and his hands [and lower arms] up to the elbows, that he must rub his head [with his wet hands],[100] and that he must wash his feet up to the ankles.
>
> "'He must then proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh (Exalted is He) and extol Him [*yukabbiru 'llāha—ta'ālā—wa yahmadu-hu*].
>
> "'Then he must recite as much of the Qur'ān as his knowledge of it permits.
>
> "'Then he must proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh [*yukabbiru*] and place the palms of his hands on his knees, so that his joints are comfortable and relaxed.
>
> "'Then he must say:

May Allāh hear and accept	*sami'a 'llāhu*
the praise of one who praises Him!	*li-man hamidah*

> —and assume an upright posture, so that his spine is straight and erect, and so that every member of his body is in its proper position.
>
> "'Then he must proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh [*yukabbiru*] and prostrate himself [*wa-yasjudu*], placing his forehead firmly on the ground, so that all his joints are comfortable and relaxed.
>
> "'Then he must proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh [*yukabbiru*], sit evenly on his buttocks, and straighten his spine.'

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[100] As Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in Vol. 1, pp. 8–9, when listing the obligatory elements [*farā'id*] of ritual purification:

Rubbing the head [*mash ar-ra's*]. The way to do this is by dipping the hands in water, then raising them [wet but] empty, placing them on the front part of the head, drawing them to the back of the head, then returning them to their original position.

9. Shutting one's eyes *[taghmīḍ al-'ainain]*.
10. Turning and glancing around during the prayer *[al-iltifāt fi 's-ṣalāt]*.

According to a traditional report, 'Utba ibn 'Āmir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) referred to this when he said, in commenting on the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Those who are constant	*alladhīna hum 'alā*
in their prayer. (70:23)	*ṣalāti-him dā'imūn*.

—"While they are performing the prayer, they turn neither to the right nor to the left."

'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: "I once asked Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about the case of a man who turns and glances around during the ritual prayer *[ṣalat]*, and he replied:

> "'That is nothing but a crooked trick, by which the Devil *[ash-Shaiṭān]* contrives to steal from the prayer performed by My servant.'"

It is said that Ṭalha (viz., the son of Muṣrif) once came to visit 'Abd al-Jabbār ibn Wā'il. He found the latter involved with a group of people, so he whispered something to him, and took his leave. 'Abd al-Jabbār then said to his companions: "Do you know what he said? He said: 'When I saw you yesterday, I noticed that you were turning and glancing around, while you were performing the ritual prayer *[wa anta tuṣallī]*.'"

From the following tradition *[ḥadīth]*, we learn that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When the servant [of the Lord] begins the ritual prayer *[fataḥa 's-ṣalāt]*, Allāh confronts him with His face, and He does not turn it away, unless the servant is the one who turns aside, or glances to right and left.

To quote another tradition *[ḥadīth]*:

> As long as the servant [of the Lord] is constant in the performance of his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, he possesses three characteristics, namely: (1) Righteousness *[birr]* is steadily showering down upon him, from the clouds in the sky onto the parting of the hair on his head. (2) Angels are flying to and fro, between a spot next to his feet and the clouds in the sky. (3) An angelic herald is crying: "If the person at prayer *[al-muṣallī]* only knew with Whom he is intimately conversing *[yunājī]*, he would not move away *[mā 'ntaqal]*.

That is to say, he would not turn around and leave.

by the school *[madhhab]* of Imām ash-Shāfiʿī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

Those who attend are recommended to arrive early, to wear elegant clothes, and to perfume themselves, as we have mentioned previously, in connection with the special qualities of Friday, the Day of Congregational Prayer *[al-Jumʿa]*.[333]

The most appropriate setting for its performance is a large space in the open air,[334] and it is considered improper to convene it inside the congregational mosque *[jāmiʿ]*, unless there is a valid pretext for doing so.

There is no objection to the attendance of women.

The most appropriate course is to make one's way to the site on foot, and then to return home by a different route. We have mentioned the reason *[ʿilla]* for this in our discussion of the special qualities of the Two Festivals *[al-ʿĪdain]*.[335]

The summons to it is the cry:

The ritual prayer is being convened! *as-ṣalātu jāmiʿa.*[336]

[The ritual prayer of the Two Festivals] consists of two cycles *[rakʿatān]*. In the first cycle, seven affirmations of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīrāt]* are proclaimed,[337] after the introductory invocation *[duʿāʾ al-istiftāḥ]*,[338] but before the plea for refuge with Allāh *[taʿawwudh]*.[339] In the second cycle, five affirmations of Allāh's Supreme

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[333] See Vol. 3, pp. 295–325, where Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has devoted a lengthy Discourse to the special qualities of Friday, the Day of Congregational Prayer *[al-Jumʿa]*.

[334] Literally, "in the desert *[ṣaḥrāʾ]*."

[335] See Vol. 3, pp. 146–49, 162–65 and 276–77.

[336] This brief announcement takes the place of the usual call to prayer *[adhān]*.

[337] The affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness is expressed by declaring: "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]." The general term for this affirmation is *takbīr*. A specific utterance thereof is called a *takbīra*, and the form *takbīrāt* is the plural of *takbīra*.

[338] The introductory invocation *[duʿāʾ al-istiftāḥ]*, is often referred to simply as *al-istiftāḥ* or *al-iftitāḥ* [the introduction]. It is uttered quietly, in the following words:

Allāh is Supremely Great, immensely so!	*Allāhu Akbar kabīrā,*
And praise be to Allāh, abundantly!	*wa 'l-ḥamdu li'llāhi kathīrā*
And glory be to Allāh, both early and late.	*wa subḥāna 'llāhi bukratan wa aṣīlā.*

[339] The plea for refuge with Allāh *[taʿawwudh]* is made by uttering the words:

I take refuge with Allāh	*aʿūdhu bi-'llāhi*
from Satan the accursed.	*mina 'sh-shaiṭāni 'r-rajīm.*

Greatness *[takbīrāt]* are proclaimed, before the Qur'ānic recitation. With each affirmation *[takbīra]*, the worshipper raises his hands [to the lobes of his ears] and says:

Allāh is Supremely Great,	*Allāhu Akbar*
immensely so!	*kabīrā:*
And praise be to Allāh, abundantly!	*wa 'l-ḥamdu li'llāhi kathīrā*
And glory be to Allāh,	*wa subḥāna 'llāhi*
both early and late.	*bukratan wa aṣīlā:*
And Allāh's blessings	*wa ṣalawātu 'llāhi*
upon our Master	*'alā Sayyidi-nā*
Muḥammad the Prophet,	*Muḥammadini 'n-Nabiyyi*
and his family,	*wa āli-hi*
and may He grant [him] peace.	*wa sallama taslīmā.*

When he has finished affirming Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*, he must seek refuge with Him *[ista'ādha]*, and recite the Opening Sūra *[al-Fātiḥa]*. Then [in the first cycle] he should recite [the Sūra that begins with the words]: "*Sabbiḥi 'sma Rabbi-ka 'l-A'lā*... [Glorify the Name of your Lord the Most High...]."[340] In the second cycle, he should recite [the Sūra that begins with the words]: "*Hal atā-ka ḥadīthu 'l-ghāshiya* [Have you received the story of the Calamity?]"[341]

As an acceptable alternative, he may recite, in the first cycle, [the Sūra that begins with the words]: "*Qāf: wa 'l-Qur'āni 'l-majīd* [*Qāf*: By the glorious Qur'ān!],"[342] and in the second cycle, [the Sūra that begins with the words]: "*Iqtarabati 's-sā'atu wa 'nshaqqa 'l-qamar* [The Hour has drawn near and the moon has been split in two]."[343] A statement to this effect has been attributed to our Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

The recitation of yet other Sūras [instead of those mentioned above] is also permissible.

Concerning the postponement of the introductory invocation *[al-istiftāḥ]* until the moment of the Qur'ānic recitation, there are likewise two [conflicting] reports. According to one of them, it should be pronounced immediately after the consecratory affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīrat al-iḥrām]*. According to the other, it should be deferred, together with the plea for refuge *[ta'awwudh]*, until the moment of the Qur'ānic recitation.

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[340] That is to say, the Sūra of the Most High *[Sūrat al-A'lā]*. (Q. 87.)

[341] That is to say, the Sūra of the Calamity *[Sūrat al-Ghāshiya]*. (Q. 88.)

[342] That is to say, the Sūra entitled "Qāf" *[Sūrat Qāf]*. (Q. 50.)

[343] That is to say, the Sūra of the Moon *[Sūrat al-Qamar]*. (Q. 54.)

When a worshipper takes part in the Festival prayer *[salla 'l-'Īd]*, he should not concern himself with supererogatory ritual practices *[nawāfil mina 's-salāt]*, nor should he perform any [voluntary] prayer in advance of it. He should rather go home to his family, so that all of its members may rally together in his presence. He should be on his very best behavior with his family, and should make every effort to provide for them with extra generosity, because, as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> The days of the Festival *['Īd]* are the days of eating, drinking, and cultivating family ties.

This applies to the two days of the Two Festivals *['Īd]*, and also to the Days of Drying Meat *[Ayyām at-Tashrīq.]*[144]

If they [the members of a local community] choose to perform it [the Festival prayer] in the mosque *[masjid]* [rather than in an open space], it is permissible for them to do so. When the worshipper enters the mosque, he should not sit down until he has performed the two cycles of ritual prayer *[rak'atain]* known as "the greeting of the mosque *[taḥiyyat al-masjid]*," in accordance with the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Whenever one of you enters the mosque, he should not sit down until he has performed two cycles of ritual prayer *[rak'atain]*.

This applies to the two days of the Two Festivals *['Īd]*, as well as to all other occasions.

When our Imām Ahmad [ibn Ḥanbal] propounded the ban on supererogatory observance *[tanafful]*, he obviously assumed that the site of the prayer *[al-musallā]* would be in an open space, because it is traditionally reported, through several lines of transmission, that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed no ritual prayer beforehand, and none afterward. This was stated explicitly by [the Caliph] 'Umar [ibn al-Khattāb], by 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Abbās, and by Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with them all). [On the days of the Two Festivals], the Prophet's own prayer *[salāt an-Nabī]* (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was always performed at the [open-air] site of prayer in the area of the burial ground *[al-musallā fi 'l-jabbāna]*.[345] Had it been in the mosque *[masjid]*, he would certainly not (Allāh bless him and give him peace) have omitted [the two cycles of ritual prayer known as] the greeting of the mosque *[tahiyyat al-masjid]*.

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[144] The term *tashrīq* denotes the drying up of the blood from the animals sacrificed. The Days of Drying Meat *[Ayyām at-Tashrīq]* are the three days immediately following the Day of Sacrifice *[Yawm an-Naḥr]*.

If a worshipper misses the whole of the ritual prayer of the Festival *[salāt al-'Īd]*, it is considered commendable for him to make it up. In order to do so, he may adopt either of two options: He may perform four cycles, as in the forenoon prayer *[salāt ad-duhā]*,[346] without the [multiple] affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*, or he may copy the format [of the Festival prayer], by including the [multiple] affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*.

All of this should rally his family and friends around him, and he will thereby earn considerable grace and favor.

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[345] As Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has informed us in Vol. 3, p. 147:

> The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:
>
> When the Day of Breaking the Fast *[Yawm al-Fitr]* comes around, and the people emerge from their homes to pray in the open space near the burial ground *[jabbāna]*, Allāh (Exalted is He) will take notice of them, and He will say: "My servants, for My sake you have kept the fast, and for My sake you have performed the prayers. Now take your leave, knowing that you have been granted forgiveness!"

[346] See note 98 on p. 83, also pp. 90–92 above.

3.
Concerning the ritual prayer for relief from drought *[ṣalāt al-istisqā']*.

As for the ritual prayer for relief from drought *[ṣalāt al-istisqā']*, it is performed as a customary observance *[sunna]*.

The prayer leader *[imām]* goes out [of town] to conduct it in the forenoon *[ḍaḥwa]*, as he does in the case of the Two Festivals *['Īdain]*. It closely resembles the ritual prayer of the Two Festivals *[ṣalāt al-'Īdain]* in all of its characteristic features, the site of its performance, and its rules *[aḥkām]*.

It is appropriate for those who attend it to be neatly dressed, and scrupulously purified of all forms of defilement and dirt. It is not appropriate for them to perfume themselves, however, because the situation calls for begging, self-abasement, and petitioning for relief that is sorely needed. What is recommended, therefore, is that they should set out to attend it in their everyday work-clothes *[thiyāb al-bidhla]*, with an attitude of submissiveness, earnest entreaty, abject humility, contrition and sorrow. They should be accompanied by the old men and old women, the youths, and the handicapped members of their community.

They should also extricate themselves from acts of injustice, from liabilities incurred through misappropriation and other forms of misconduct, and from obligations owed to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), such as alms-dues *[zakawāt]*, vows *[nudhūr]*, and expiations *[kaffārāt]*. They should do a great deal of charitable giving *[ṣadaqa]*, and a great deal of fasting *[ṣiyām]*. They should renew their repentance *[tawba]*, and commit themselves to steadfast perseverance in it until death. They should not affront the Lord (Glory be to Him) with sins, whether they be major *[kabīra]* or minor *[ṣaghīra]*. They should be modestly aware of Him (Almighty and Glorious is He) in their private quarters, since there is no place so private as to be secluded from Him. No secret can be kept hidden from Him, neither on earth nor in heaven, for He is Aware of the secret and of all hidden things *[Huwa 'Ālimun bi-'s-sirri wa 'l-khafiyyāt]*.[147]

It is likewise recommended that they should invoke the good offices of the pious abstainers *[zuhhād]*, the righteous *[ṣāliḥīn]*, and people devoted to learning, virtue and religion. This recommendation is based on the precedent set by [the Caliph] 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him), when he once went out to pray for relief from drought *[kharaja yastasqī]*. As we learn from a traditional report, he took al-'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him) by the hand, then turned his face toward the *Qibla* [the direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca], and said: "O Allāh, this is the paternal uncle of our Prophet. We have come to appeal to You, invoking his good offices, so grant us water *[fa-'sqi-nā]* for his sake!" The reporter added: "And before they got back home, they were blessed with rain."

In order to grasp the point of this, one must understand that the withholding of rain is a chastisement, a requital for the sinful acts of disobedience committed by human beings *[ma'āṣī banī Ādam]*. This explains why [according to the traditional account]:

> When the unbeliever *[kāfir]* dies and is buried in his grave, and when [the interrogating angels called] Munkir and Nakīr come and ask him about his Lord *[Rabb]*, his Prophet *[Nabī]* and his religion *[dīn]*, and when he cannot answer their questions, the pair of them will beat him with an iron hammer *[mirzabba]*. This will cause him to yell so loud that his screams will be heard by all created beings, apart from the jinn and humankind. Every single thing will curse him, even the sheep held by the butcher, with the knife at its throat, for it will say: "May Allāh curse him! It was because of him that we were deprived of the rainfall!"

This is in keeping with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

They will be cursed by Allāh,	*ulā'ika yal'anu-humu 'llāhu*
and all who can curse will curse them.	*wa yal'anu-humu 'l-lā'inūn*
(2:159)	

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[147] As Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us in His own words:

Say: "The death from which you flee	*qul inna 'l-mawta 'lladhī tafirrūna*
is bound to meet up with you;	*min-hu fa-inna-hu mulāqī-kum*
then you will be returned	*thumma turaddūna*
to the Knower of the unseen	*ilā 'Ālimi 'l-ghaibi*
and the visible,	*wa 'sh-shahādati*
and He will tell you	*fa-yunabbi'u-kum*
what you have been doing." (62:8)	*bi-mā kuntum ta'malūn.*

For, when the human being *[ādamī]* becomes corrupt, his corruption infects every other living creature, and when he behaves righteously, his righteousness extends its influence to everything. His corruption is the result of his sinful disobedience to his Lord, while his righteousness is the result of his worshipful obedience to Him (Almighty and Glorious is He).

[This is how the prayer must be performed]:

The Leader of the Community *[al-Imām]*, or his deputy, must lead the people in a ritual prayer of two cycles *[rak'atain]*, without a call to prayer *[adhān]*, and without a last-minute announcement *[iqāma]*.[348]

In the first cycle, he must pronounce the affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness six times, in addition to the consecratory affirmation *[takbīrat al-iḥrām]*, and then five times in the second cycle, in addition to the affirmation uttered when rising from the posture of prostration *[takbīrat al-qiyām mina 's-sujūd]*. This should all be done in the manner we have described above, in connection with the Festival prayer *[ṣalāt al-'Īd]*.[349] He must likewise extol Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) between every two affirmations of His Supreme Greatness *[takbīratain]*.

As soon as he has finished leading the people in the ritual prayer *[idhā ṣallā bi-him]*, he should deliver a sermon *[khuṭba]* to the assembled congregation. It is also permissible for him to deliver the sermon before the performance of the prayer *[ṣalāt]*. According to one account of the [Ḥanbalī] doctrine, he is free to choose either option. It is also reported that he [Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) maintained that he [the prayer leader] is not required to deliver any sermon at all on this occasion, and that he should simply offer a prayer of supplication *[yad'ū fa-ḥasb]*.

The prayer leader *[imām]* should therefore do whatever is easiest and most convenient for him in this regard. If he does deliver a sermon, he should open it with the affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*, as he would in the case of the Festival sermon *[khuṭbat al-'Īd]*, and he should repeat the invocation of blessings upon Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) many times over. In the course of his sermon, he should recite the Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]*:

And I have said: "Seek forgiveness from your Lord;	*fa-qultu 'staghfirū Rabba-kum*

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[348] The *iqāma*, the announcement that the ritual prayer is about to begin, is an abbreviated version of the *adhān* [call to prayer], with the addition of the words (repeated twice): *qad qāmati 's-salāh* [The prayer is about to begin!]

[349] See pp. 246–47 above.

He is ever All-Forgiving, and He	*inna-hu kāna Ghaffārā*
will let loose the sky for you,	*yursili 's-samā'a*
in plenteous rain	*'alai-kum midrārā.*
and He will succor you	*wa yumdid-kum*
with wealth and sons,	*bi-amwālin wa banīna*
and He will assign unto you gardens,	*wa yaj'al la-kum jannātin*
and He will assign unto you rivers."	*wa yaj'al la-kum anhārā*
(71:10–12)	

When he has finished delivering his sermon, he should stand with his face toward the *Qibla*, then turn his cloak around, moving the part that was on his right shoulder over to the left, and the part that was on his left shoulder over to the right, without turning it upside down. All the people present should do likewise, and they should leave their cloaks reversed until they get back home to their families, at which point they may remove them, when they change their other clothes. They should do this as a gesture of optimism, betokening the transformation of the drought, and because the Tradition *[Sunna]* provides a precedent for it, as we know from the report of 'Abbād ibn Tamīm, whose paternal uncle (may Allāh be well pleased with him) told him:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) led the people out [into the desert] to pray for rain *[yastasqī]*. He then led them in the performance of two cycles of ritual prayer *[sallā bi-him rak'atain]*, pronouncing the Qur'ānic recitation in an audible voice in each cycle. He reversed his cloak, offered a supplication *[da'ā]*, prayed for rain *[istasqā]*, and stood facing the *Qibla*."

Then, having reversed his cloak, the prayer leader *[imām]* should raise his hands, facing the *Qibla* as he does so, and offer the prayer of supplication *[du'ā']* offered by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

O Allāh, grant us a rainfall	*Allāhumma 'sqi-nā*
that is helpful,	*ghaithan*
wholesome, healthful, productive,	*mughīthan marī'an hanī'an*
copious and widespread.[150]	*marī'an ghadaqan mujallilā*
O Allāh, grant us the gift of rain,	*Allāhumma 'sqi-na 'l-ghaitha*
and do not include us	*wa lā taj'al-nā*
among the hopeless.	*mina 'l-qāniṭīn:*
O Allāh, let it be a downpour of mercy,	*Allāhumma suqyā raḥmatin*
not a downpour of torment,	*lā suqyā 'adhābin*
not of obliteration, not of tribulation,	*wa lā maḥqin wa lā balā'in*
not of destruction, not of flooding.	*wa lā hadmin wa lā gharaq*

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[150] **Author's note**: According to one traditional report, the wording at this point should rather be:

widespread, general, layer-upon-layer,	*mujallilan 'āmman*
streaming, continuous.	*ṭabaqan saḥḥan dā'imā*

O Allāh, in these lands,	*Allāhumma inna bi'l-bilādi*
and among [Your] servants	*wa 'l-'ibādi*
and creatures,	*wa 'l-khalqi*
there is such great hardship	*mina 'l-la'wā'i*
and affliction,	*wa 'l-balā'i*
and so much trouble and distress,	*wa 'l-jahdi wa 'd-danki*
that no complaint [is meaningful],	*mā lā shakwā*
unless it be addressed to You.	*illā ilai-k.*

O Allāh, irrigate the crops for us,	*Allāhumma anbit la-na 'z-zar'a*
and cause the udders to yield	*wa adirra*
milk for us.	*la-na 'd-dar'a*
Let us drink from the bounty	*wa 'sqi-nā min barakāti 's-*
of the sky,	*samā'i*
and let the bounties of the earth	*wa anbit la-nā min*
grow for us.	*barakāti 'l-arḍ.*

O Allāh, relieve us of the agony,	*Allāhumma 'rfa' 'an-na 'l-jahda*
the hunger and the destitution,	*wa 'l-jū'a wa 'l-'urya*
and remove from us the suffering	*wa 'kshif 'an-nā mina 'l-balā'i*
that none but You can take away.	*mā lā yakshifu-hu ghairu-k.*

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
we seek forgiveness from You.	*innā nastaghfiru-ka*
Surely You are ever All-Forgiving,	*inna-ka kunta Ghaffārā:*
so let loose the sky for us	*fa-arsili 's-samā'a*
in plenteous rain.[351]	*'alai-nā midrārā.*

—He should likewise plead *[yad'ū]*:

O Allāh, You have	*Allāhumma inna-ka amarta-nā*
commanded us to appeal to You,	*amarta-nā bi-du'ā'i-ka*
and You have promised us	*wa wa'adta-nā*
Your response.	*ijābata-ka*
Now we have appealed	*fa-qad da'awnā*
as You commanded us,	*ka-mā amarta-nā*
so respond to us as You promised us'	*fa-'stajib la-nā ka-mā wa'adta-nā.*

It has also been maintained that he should turn his face toward the *Qibla* while delivering the sermon, and that he should be facing the *Qibla* when he brings it to its conclusion, at which point he should follow it immediately with the prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*. The most appropriate procedure, however, is the one we have already mentioned,

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[351] This is the very plea invited by (Almighty and Glorious is He), in the words of the Qur'ānic recitation included in the sermon *[khuṭba]* referred to above, namely:

And I have said: "Seek forgiveness from	*fa-qultu 'staghfirū Rabba-kum*
your Lord; He is ever All-Forgiving,	*inna-hu kāna Ghaffārā*
and He will let loose the sky for you	*yursili 's-samā'a*
in plenteous rain." (71:10,11)	*'alai-kum midrārā.*

namely, that he should finish delivering the sermon, and only then turn his face toward the *Qibla*. This is because the purpose of the sermon is to exhort, to admonish and to intimidate, and this can only be achieved if the preacher faces the people and addresses them directly, so that he can reach both their ears and their hearts. If he stands facing the *Qibla*, he will be turning his back on them again, as he had to do when he stood out in front and led them in the ritual prayer *[sallā bi-him]*.

4.

The ritual prayer at the eclipse of the sun *[ṣalāt al-kusūf]* and at the eclipse of the moon *[ṣalāt al-khusūf]*.

As for the ritual prayer at the eclipse of the sun *[ṣalāt al-kusūf]*, it is a firmly established custom *[sunna muʾakkada]*.

The time for its performance lasts from the moment of the eclipse *[kusūf]* until the point of clarity, when the light is fully restored to the sun or the moon. That is to say, the period begins when the sun is eclipsed *[kasafat as-shams]*, or when the moon is eclipsed *[khasafa 'l-qamar]*.

In other words, the time of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* extends from the first appearance of blackness, opaqueness and diminished radiance, until the disappearance thereof, at which point the time of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* expires.

According to customary practice *[sunna]*, this prayer should be performed in the congregational mosque *[jāmiʿ]*, the site of the Friday prayer *[ṣalāt al-jumʿa]*.

The summons to it is the cry:

The ritual prayer is being convened! *aṣ-ṣalātu jāmiʿa* [352]

The prayer leader *[imām]* must lead the congregation in the performance of two cycles of ritual prayer *[rakʿatain]*. In the first cycle, he should proceed as follows:

1. Pronounce the consecratory affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness.[353]
2. Pronounce the introductory invocation.[354]
3. Pronounce the the plea for refuge with Allāh.[355]

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[352] As in the case of the prayer of the Two Festivals *[ṣalāt al-ʿĪdain]*, this brief announcement takes the place of the usual call to prayer *[adhān]*. (See p. 240 above.)

[353] See note 236 on p. 174 above.

[354] See note 338 on p. 246 above.

[355] The plea for refuge with Allāh *[taʿawwudh]* is made by uttering the words:

I take refuge with Allāh from Satan the accursed.	*aʿūdhu bi-'llāhi* *mina 'sh-shaiṭāni 'r-rajīm.*

4. Recite the Opening Sūra of the Qur'ān *[al-Fātiha]*.

5. Recite the Sūra of the Cow *[Sūrat al-Baqara]*.[356]

6. Perform the act of bowing, and maintain the posture of bowing *[rukū']* for a considerable period of time, while repeating the glorification of Allāh *[tasbīh]* for as long as it would take to recite one hundred verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān.

7. Raise his head, saying as he does so:

May Allāh hear and accept	*sami'a 'llāhu*
the praise of one who praises Him'	*li-man hamidah.*

8. Recite the Opening Sūra *[al-Fātiha]* and the Sūra of the Family of 'Imrān *[Āl 'Imrān]*.[357]

9. Perform a second act of bowing *[rukū']*, distinct from the first.

10. Raise his head, in the same way as before.

11. Perform two prolonged acts of prostration *[sajdatain]*, repeating the glorification of Allāh *[tasbīh]*, in each of the two, for as long as it would take to recite one hundred verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān.

12. Stand erect, in readiness to perform the second cycle.

In the second cycle, he should recite the Opening Sūra *[al-Fātiha]*, followed by the Sūra of Women *[an-Nisā']*.[358] Then he should perform the act of bowing, and maintain the posture of bowing *[rukū']* for a considerable period of time. He should then straighten up, and recite the Opening Sūra *[al-Fātiha]* and the Sūra of the Table *[al-Mā'ida]*.[359]

If he is not proficient in the recitation of these long Sūras, he may recite other Sūras of the Qur'ān instead, so long as the verses *[āyāt]* add up to the same total number. If he only knows the Sūra that begins with "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Ahad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!'],"[360] he should therefore recite it in precisely that manner.

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[356] The Sūra of the Cow *[Sūrat al-Baqara]* is the second Sūra of the Qur'ān. It consists of 286 verses *[āyāt]*.

[357] The Sūra of the Family of 'Imrān *[Sūrat Āl 'Imrān]* is the third Sūra of the Qur'ān. It consists of 200 verses *[āyāt]*.

[358] The Sūra of Women *[Sūrat an-Nisā']* is the fourth Sūra of the Qur'ān. It consists of 177 verses *[āyāt]*.

[359] The Sūra of the Table *[Sūrat al-Mā'ida]* is the fifth Sūra of the Qur'ān. It consists of 120 verses *[āyāt]*.

[360] Sūra 112.

In the second upright posture, the length of his Qurʾānic recitation should be two thirds of his recitation in the first upright posture. In the third upright posture, the one he assumes on rising from the posture of prostration *[sujūd]*, the length of his recitation should be half of his recitation in the first upright posture. In the final upright posture, i.e., the fourth, it should be two thirds the length of the recitation in the third upright posture, i.e., the one before it.

As for the glorification of Allāh *[tasbīḥ]*, it should be the equivalent of two thirds of his recitation, in each upright posture. Once he has completed it, he should immediately adopt the bowing posture *[rukūʿ]*; there is no disagreement on this point.

Then [after the two final prostrations] he should conclude the prayer by pronouncing the salutation. Thus [in the complete prayer] there are four acts of bowing *[rakaʿāt]* and four acts of prostration *[sajadāt]*, since the bowing posture *[rukūʿ]* is adopted twice in each cycle *[rakʿa]*.[361]

If the eclipse departs while the people are still engaged in the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, the recommended practice is to complete a simplified version its performance, rather than discontinue it abruptly.

If a person wishes to perform this prayer at home, either by himself or with his family, it is permissible for him to do so. The preferable course, however, is the one we have described.

Our basic authority concerning the ritual prayer at the eclipse of the sun *[ṣalāt al-kusūf]*, as we have explained its performance, is the traditional account provided by ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), who is reported as having said:

"An eclipse of the sun occurred in the time of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) came to the place of prayer *[muṣallā]*. He proclaimed the Supreme Greatness of Allāh *[kabbara]*, and the people did likewise. Then he recited from the Qurʾān, pronouncing his recitation in an audible voice. He remained standing erect for a considerable length of time, then he bowed down *[rakaʿa]* and maintained the bowing posture *[rukūʿ]* for a long time. Then he raised his head, and declared:

May Allāh hear and accept the praise of one who praises Him'	*samiʿa 'llāhu li-man ḥamidah*

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[361] The term *rakʿa* [an act of bowing] has acquired an extended meaning, since it is generally used to denote the whole series of movements and postures—including the bowing posture *[rukūʿ]*—that constitute one cycle of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. (The dual and plural forms, corresponding to the singular form *rakʿa*, are *rakʿatān/-ain* and *rakaʿāt*, respectively.)

"Then he recited again from the Qur'ān, and continued his recitation for a long time. Then he bowed down *[raka'a]* and maintained the bowing posture *[rukū']* for a long time. Then he raised his head. Then he prostrated himself *[sajada]*. Then he stood up straight, and went on to perform the second [cycle of prayer] in similar fashion. Then he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'The sun and the moon are two of the signs of Allāh's *[āyatān min āyāti'llāh]* They do not become eclipsed on account of someone's death, nor on account of someone's birth. So, if you see that [eclipse] occurring, take refuge at once in the ritual prayer *[salāt]*.'"

As for the verse *[āya]* that is said to be "more excellent than a hundred thousand verses," most of the scholars maintain that its specific identity is concealed from our knowledge, like the exact date of the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*,[illegible] or the precise time of the Special Hour on Friday, the Day of Congregation *[Sā'at al-Jum'a]*.[illegible] According to 'Abd al-Ḥaqq, however, it is most probably either the final verse *[āya]* of the Sūra of Exile *[Sūrat al-Ḥashr]*, in which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

He is Allāh, the Creator,	*Huwa 'llāhu 'l-Khāliqu 'l-*
the Maker, the Shaper.	*Bāri'u 'l-Muṣawwiru*
His are the Most Beautiful Names.	*la-hu 'l-asmā'u 'l-ḥusnā.*
All that is in the heavens	*yusabbiḥu la-hu*
glorifies Him	*mā fi 's-samāwāti*
and all that is in the earth,	*wa mā fi 'l-arḍ:*
and He is the Omnipotent,	*wa Huwa 'l-'Azīzu 'l-*
the All-Wise. (59:24)	*Ḥakīm.*

—or the first verse *[āya]* of the Sūra of Iron *[Sūrat al-Ḥadīd]*, in which Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

All that is in the heavens	*sabbaḥa li'llāhi*
and the earth has glorified Allāh,	*mā fi 's-samāwāti wa 'l-arḍ:*
and He is the Omnipotent,	*wa Huwa 'l-'Azīzu 'l-*
the All-Wise. (57:1)	*Ḥakīm.*

◆

[illegible] As Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained, in the Sixth Discourse of the present work:

Concerning the wisdom in the decision of Allāh (Exalted is He) to make known [the date of] the Night of Absolution, while concealing [that of] the Night of Power, it has been said to lie in the fact that the Night of Power is the night of mercy and forgiveness and emancipation from the fires of Hell, which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has kept hidden so that there can be no discussion about it. He has made known the Night of Absolution, however, because it is the night of regulation and decree, the night of displeasure and approval, the night of acceptance and rejection, of attainment and obstruction, the night of bliss and woe, of grace and cleansing.
(See Vol. 3, p. 67.)

[illegible] See p. 18 above, and especially Vol. 3, pp. 295–325.

Once they have adopted the sitting posture [after the two prostrations], and have pronounced the testimony [*tashahhud*], the prayer leader [*imām*] will lead them in the final salutation [*yusallimu bi-him*].

The prayer leader [*imām*] should prolong his Qur'ānic recitation in the second cycle, thereby allowing sufficient time for the first contingent to complete the second cycle [by themselves], before changing places with their comrades. The second contingent can then come and consecrate themselves to prayer in his company. He should also prolong the testimony [*tashahhud*] for the benefit of the second contingent, thereby giving them time to complete the cycle they have missed, until they catch up with him in the testimony, at which point he should lead them in the final salutation.

The second contingent will thus obtain the merit of pronouncing the salutation [*salām*] together with the prayer leader [*imām*], while the first contingent will obtain the merit of pronouncing the initial consecration [*taḥrīm*] together with the prayer leader [*imām*].

This was how Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) led the Muslims in the performance of this ritual prayer [*sallā-hā bi'l-Muslimīn*] during the military campaign [*ghazwa*] of Dhāt ar-Riqā'.[362]

According to the traditional report [*ḥadīth*] of Sahl ibn Abī Khuzaima (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) explained:

> The prayer leader [*imām*] should stand with one row behind him, and one row in front of the enemy. He should lead those behind him in one act of bowing [*rak'a*] and two acts of prostration [*sajdatain*], then stand up and maintain an upright posture, until they have performed a cycle of prayer [*rak'a*] by themselves. Then they should change places with the contingent at the front, and he should then lead the second contingent in turn in one act of bowing [*rak'a*] and two acts of prostration [*sajdatain*]. Then he should remain in the sitting posture, until they have completed another cycle [*rak'a*] to make up for the one they missed. Then he should lead them in pronouncing the final salutation.

According to a statement attributed to our Imām [Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), there is evidence to support the permissibility of postponing the ritual prayer [*salāt*], in wartime situations of close combat and hot pursuit, until such conditions no longer prevail, and war has laid down its burdens.

In our treatment of it up to this point, we have described the ritual prayer in time of danger [*salāt al-khauf*] as a two-cycle prayer, corresponding

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[362] In the campaign of Dhāt ar-Riqā', the Muslim troops were four hundred strong.

Concerning the merit of fasting *[ṣiyām]* in general.

On this subject, as we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr,[a] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone devotes a single day to fasting, for the purpose of gaining the countenance of Allāh (Exalted is He), Allāh will keep him at a distance from Hell—at the distance covered by a raven *[ghurāb]* that takes flight when it is merely a chick, and then stays airborne till it dies of old age.

It is said that the raven *[ghurāb]* has a normal lifespan of fifty years!

According to a report from Abu'd-Dardā' (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> If someone devotes a single day to fasting, for the sake of Allāh's cause *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*, Allāh will install a trench *[khandaq]* between him and the Fire of Hell, and the width thereof will be as great as the distance between the heaven and the earth.

According to a another traditional report, this one from Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone devotes a single day to fasting, for the sake of Allāh's cause *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*, Allāh will reward him for it by keeping his face at a distance from the Fire of Hell, for seventy autumn seasons.

'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: "I once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> "'Whenever a servant [of the Lord] embarks upon the morning in a state of fasting, the gates of heaven are opened up for him, the members of his body glorify the Lord, and the inhabitants of the heaven of this lower world *[ahl samā' ad-dunyā]* seek forgiveness on his behalf, until the world disappears behind the veil [of night]. If that servant also performs one or two cycles of ritual prayer

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[a] **Author's note**. Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **'Amr ibn Rabī'a—Salām ibn Qais** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

upright posture. When the prayer leader *[imām]* prostrates himself in the second cycle, the row to remain standing should be the first of the rows that performed the prostration with him in the first cycle. This row must now keep watch over the others, until the prayer leader *[imām]* adopts the sitting posture to pronounce the testimony *[tashahhud]*, at which point they must join him in the testimony. They should follow him, therefore, so that he can lead all of them together in the final salutation.

According to traditional report, this is how the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) conducted the prayer, when danger threatened at ʿUsfān [a place near Mecca].

As a permissible alternative, in the second cycle, the first row can move to the rear, while the second row moves forward and takes its place, in order to stand guard in front.

If the danger is extremely intense, and the combat is being waged at very close quarters, the troops may pray in congregation, or as separate individuals, in whatever manner they find possible under the circumstances: walking or riding, facing the *Qibla* or with their backs to it, by making gestures or without making gestures. As to whether or not they are required to face the *Qibla* at the very beginning of the prayer *[ṣalāt]*, there are two conflicting traditional reports.

Then, if safety is assured, and the enemy is routed, they should bring their prayer *[ṣalāt]* to completion. They should dismount from their riding beasts, turning to face the *Qibla* as they do so.

If they embark on the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* with a sense of security, but then grave danger suddenly threatens, they should mount up and complete the prayer of danger *[ṣalāt al-khauf]*, even if they need to strike and thrust, as they charge to and fro in battle.

This form of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* is permissible for anyone who is in danger of being attacked by any kind of enemy, including savage beasts, torrential floods, highway robbers, and other such menacing threats. According to one of two conflicting reports, it is likewise permissible if he is in pursuit of the enemy, and in danger of letting him escape, just when his defeat is imminent.

◆

6.
Concerning the shortened version of the ritual prayer *[qaṣr aṣ-ṣalāt]*.

As for the shortened version of the ritual prayer *[qaṣr aṣ-ṣalāt]*, it is permissible for the long-distance traveler to perform it, once he has passed beyond the houses of his own town or village, or beyond the tents of his nomadic tribe.

In the case of a four-cycle prayer *[rubāʿiyya]*,[165] the traveler may shorten it to two cycles *[rakʿatain]*, provided that his journey is a long one. In this context, a long journey means one that covers a distance of sixteen leagues, i.e., four courier-stages, or forty-eight miles according to the Hāshimī measure, one courier-stage *[barīd]* being equal to four leagues *[farāsikh*, pl. of *farsakh]*.

The traveler may shorten his prayer while he is on the road, whether he is outward bound or making the homeward journey.

If he enters a town or village along the way, and intends to perform twenty-two prescribed prayers during his stay there, he must perform them in full, since his status will then be the same as that of a local resident. If he intends to perform twenty-one prescribed prayers, there are two conflicting accounts of the doctrine regarding his status. If the number is less than that, he may unquestionably shorten his prayers.

If he breaks his journey in a town, without knowing when he is going to move on—if he has no specific intention, but says: "I may leave today, or I may leave tomorrow"—he may shorten his prayers. This is based on a traditional report, according to which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once stopped in Mecca for eighteen days—some say fifteen days—and he shortened his prayers throughout his stay.

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[165] Under normal conditions, the noon prayer *[ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr]*, the afternoon prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr]* and the late evening prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ]* are all prayers of four cycles *[rakaʿāt]*. There is no shortened version of the dawn/daybreak prayer *[ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ/al-fajr]*, which always consists of two cycles, nor of the sunset prayer *[ṣalāt al-maghrib]*, which invariably consists of three cycles.

To quote the traditional report *[hadīth]* of ʿImrān ibn al-Ḥusain (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

"During the conquest *[fath]* of Mecca, at which I was present in the company of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the ritual prayers he performed were all of two cycles *[rakʿatain]* only. But then he said to the inhabitants of the city: 'Unlike us, you must perform four cycles of ritual prayer, for we are people on a journey *[qawm safar]*.'"

On another occasion, when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) spent twenty days at Tabūk, he likewise shortened his ritual prayers, as did his Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* (may Allāh be well pleased with them all).

It was Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

"The Companions of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) spent seven months in Rāmhurmuz, and they shortened the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* throughout that period."

According to another traditional report, Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once stayed for six months in Azerbaijān, and the ritual prayers he performed there were all of two cycles *[rakʿatain]* only.

It may sometimes happen that a person is a local resident, at the moment when he enters the consecrated state of ritual prayer *[aḥrama bi-'ṣ-ṣalāt]*, but then he becomes a traveler. Take the case of a passenger aboard a ship. When he starts to perform his ritual prayer, the ship is still moored within the limits of his own town, in a dock inside the walls of its port. But then the ship's captain sets sail, and the vessel leaves the confines of the town. In a case like this, the worshipper is obliged to perform the ritual prayer in full.

A similar rule would apply, if a person entered the state of consecration *[aḥrama]* while still traveling, but then arrived in a town. If he was himself a resident of that town, or if he was following the lead *[iʾtamma]* of a local resident—or of someone who might be either a resident or a traveler, for all he knew—and he had not begun the prayer with the express intention of shortening it, he would be obliged to perform the prayer in full, in any such case.

When someone is performing the ritual prayer to make up for having missed it at the prescribed time *[qādiyan li's-ṣalāt]*, it is not permissible

upright posture. When the prayer leader *[imām]* prostrates himself in the second cycle, the row to remain standing should be the first of the rows that performed the prostration with him in the first cycle. This row must now keep watch over the others, until the prayer leader *[imām]* adopts the sitting posture to pronounce the testimony *[tashahhud]*, at which point they must join him in the testimony. They should follow him, therefore, so that he can lead all of them together in the final salutation.

According to traditional report, this is how the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) conducted the prayer, when danger threatened at ʿUsfān [a place near Mecca].

As a permissible alternative, in the second cycle, the first row can move to the rear, while the second row moves forward and takes its place, in order to stand guard in front.

If the danger is extremely intense, and the combat is being waged at very close quarters, the troops may pray in congregation, or as separate individuals, in whatever manner they find possible under the circumstances: walking or riding, facing the *Qibla* or with their backs to it, by making gestures or without making gestures. As to whether or not they are required to face the *Qibla* at the very beginning of the prayer *[ṣalāt]*, there are two conflicting traditional reports.

Then, if safety is assured, and the enemy is routed, they should bring their prayer *[ṣalāt]* to completion. They should dismount from their riding beasts, turning to face the *Qibla* as they do so.

If they embark on the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* with a sense of security, but then grave danger suddenly threatens, they should mount up and complete the prayer of danger *[ṣalāt al-khauf]*, even if they need to strike and thrust, as they charge to and fro in battle.

This form of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* is permissible for anyone who is in danger of being attacked by any kind of enemy, including savage beasts, torrential floods, highway robbers, and other such menacing threats. According to one of two conflicting reports, it is likewise permissible if he is in pursuit of the enemy, and in danger of letting him escape, just when his defeat is imminent.

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Indeed, how could it be otherwise, in view of the Prophet's response (Allāh bless him and give him peace), when someone remarked to him concerning the shortened version of the ritual prayer *[qasr as-salāt]*: "Why should we continue to perform the shortened version, now that we are safe from danger [on this journey]?" To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> That is a charitable gift *[sadaqa]*. Allāh has graciously bestowed it on His servants, so accept His charitable gift!

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Allāh loves to have His dispensations accepted, just as He loves to have His strict injunctions accepted.

What astounding arrogance, therefore, on the part of someone who performs the complete prayer on a journey, and keeps the fast, thereby refusing to accept the dispensation, even though he is guilty of such major sins *[kabā'ir]* as eating unlawful food, drinking intoxicating liquor, wearing silk, committing adultery *[zinā]*[366] and sodomy *[liwāṭa]*,[367] holding false beliefs concerning fundamental principles *[uṣūl]*, and other atrocious offenses.

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[366] In the vocabulary of Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]*, the Arabic word *zinā* covers both adultery and fornication. For a precise technical definition, see J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 178.

[367] The noun *liwāṭa* is derived from the triliteral root *l-w-ṭ*, which indicates that it refers to the homosexual vices of the people of Lot *[Lūṭ]*, whose name is spelled *l-w-ṭ* in the Arabic script.

7.
Concerning the combination of two ritual prayers *[al-jam' baina 'ṣ-ṣalātain]*.

As for the combination of two ritual prayers *[al-jam' baina 'ṣ-ṣalātain]*, it is permissible for the traveler to combine the prayers of noon *[ẓuhr]* and afternoon *['aṣr]*, and those of sunset *[maghrib]* and late evening *['ishā']*, with the proviso that the journey must be a long one. In this context, a long journey is one that covers a distance of sixteen leagues *[farsakh]*, as we have already explained.[168] This practice is not permissible on a short journey, i.e., one that covers less than the distance mentioned.

The traveler is free to choose either of two options, namely:

1. He may postpone the first [of the two prayers concerned] until the earliest time prescribed for the second.
2. He may bring the second prayer forward to the time prescribed for the first.

The recommended choice is postponement, meaning that he should delay his performance of the first prayer, and perform the second early [in its prescribed period]. In other words, he should perform them both at the beginning of the period of time prescribed for the second.

If he chooses to perform both prayers in the period of time prescribed for the first, he must begin with the first, and then perform the second immediately after it.

He must formulate the intention to combine [the two prayers] at the point of consecration *[iḥrām]* for the first. He should not leave any interval between the two, except to allow for the *iqāma*,[169] and for the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']*, if his ablution needs to be renewed.

[168] In connection with the shortened version of the ritual prayer *[qaṣr aṣ-ṣalāt]*, on p. 264 above.

[169] The *iqāma*, the announcement that the ritual prayer is about to begin, is an abbreviated version of the *adhān* [call to prayer], with the addition of the words (repeated twice): *qad qāmati 'ṣ-ṣalāh* [The prayer is about to begin!]

If he performs a customary ritual *[sunnat as-salāt]* between the two [obligatory prayers], the combination *[jam']* is rendered null and void, according to one of the two accounts of the relevant doctrine. According to the other, it is not rendered null and void. In any event, the best course is for him to postpone the customary practice *[sunna]*, until after he has duly completed the obligatory observance *[fard]*, and to refrain from anything else that would separate the combined prayers.

If he performs the combination during the time prescribed for the second prayer, having formulated his intention *[niyya]* during the time prescribed for the first, that intention will be sufficient. He does not need to renew the intention, at the time when he actually performs the two prayers, because his only reason for postponing the first was to combine it with the second. It makes no difference, whether he formulates the relevant intention at the beginning of the time prescribed for the first prayer, or whether he does so with only a fraction of that time remaining. But if the time prescribed for the first prayer expires completely, before the intention to combine *[niyyat al-jam']* has been formulated, it is not permissible to perform the two prayers in combination.

If he chooses to perform the combination during the time prescribed for the second prayer, he must begin with the first, and then perform the second immediately after it, as if he were performing them in the time prescribed for the first.

Is it strictly stipulated that he must not separate the two [obligatory] prayers, by interposing a customary practice *[sunna]*, or any other [supererogatory observance]? There are two conflicting opinions regarding this matter.

Among our fellow [Ḥanbalī] scholars, there is one who maintains that combining *[jam']* and shortening *[qasr]* do not require a specific intention *[niyya]*. The scholar in question is Abū Bakr[170] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

As for the combining of prayers *[jam']* on account of rain, this is permissible when the prayers concerned are those of sunset *[maghrib]* and late evening *['ishā']*. Is it also permissible to combine the prayers of noon *[ẓuhr]* and afternoon *['aṣr]*? On this point there are two conflicting opinions.

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[170] Abū Bakr al-Khallāl (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was responsible for compiling and systematizing the legal teachings of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). He died in A.H. 311/923-4 C.E.

What if people are sheltering indoors, on account of bad weather? Is that sufficient reason to permit the combining of prayers *[jam']*, even if no rain is actually falling, and no bitterly cold wind is actually blowing? Here again, there are two conflicting opinions. We must therefore examine the particular situation in detail, if someone does in fact combine two prayers under such conditions. If he does so during the time prescribed for the first prayer, because rain is then falling, he is justified in assuming that rain will be present at the beginning of the first prayer, at the conclusion thereof, and at the beginning of the second. If he performs the combination during the time prescribed for the second prayer, it will likewise be permissible, regardless of whether the rain is still falling, or whether it has stopped by then, because he had a valid excuse for postponing the first prayer. The fact that the excuse has disappeared is irrelevant, because the first period has now elapsed and expired, so there is no possibility of restoring and recapturing it.

If we advise such a person that the combining of prayers *[jam']* is permissible, we do so in recognition of the hardship that people suffer in wet weather. Since their clothes, their shoes and their pouches get soaked and damp, it is extremely inconvenient for them to move in and out of doors [between their homes and the mosques]. The Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> When the hard and rugged tracts of ground are wet and slippery, the ritual prayer should be performed in the shelter of people's homes *[idha 'btallati 'n-ni'āl—fa-'ṣ-ṣalātu fi 'r-riḥāl]*.[171]

This saying is reported in the *Ṣaḥīḥan* [the two most famous collections of authentic traditions].

According to our [Ḥanbalī] doctrine, the status of the sick person is the same as that of the traveler, as far as the combining of ritual prayers *[jam']* is concerned, because Allāh (Exalted is He) has linked them together. He has mentioned them both in a single sentence, for He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

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[171] In the context of this saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the word *ni'āl*—which usually means 'shoes, sandals'—is interpreted by traditional authorities as synonymous with *hirar* [hard and rugged tracts of ground]. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *R-Ḥ-L*.)

And whoever of you is sick,	*fa-man kāna min-kum marīḍan*
or on a journey, [let him fast the same]	*aw ʿalā safarin*
number of other days. (2:184)	*fa-ʿiddatun min ayyāmin ukhar*

The reason for the alleviation is the incidence of disability and hardship, and this is more unequivocally and obviously applicable to the person who is sick, because the traveler may be a comfortable and pampered passenger, pleasantly relaxed, perfectly fit and sprightly. While he is on a journey, the traveler may enjoy even greater ease and luxury than at home, through the influence of his wealth, authority and power, yet he is nonetheless entitled to avail himself of the relevant dispensations *[rukhaṣ]*. The sick person is at the opposite extreme, so he is even more entitled to the dispensations than is the traveler.

◆

8.

The ritual prayer at the funeral service *[aṣ-ṣalāt ʿala ʾl-jināza].*

As for the ritual prayer at the funeral service *[aṣ-ṣalāt ʿala ʾl-jināza]*,[372] it is a collective duty *[farḍ ʿala ʾl-kifāya]*.[373] According to our [Ḥanbalī] doctrine, the person best qualified to lead this prayer is the executor *[waṣī]* of the deceased, followed by the head of state *[sulṭān]*, then by the male relatives of the deceased, in order of closeness.

The prayer leader *[imām]* should stand opposite the chest of a male corpse, and opposite the waist of a female.

If there are several corpses, they should be arranged so that their heads are in line with one another.[374] If they are of various classes, they should be arranged in order of priority, with the most distinguished lying closest to the prayer leader *[imām]*. Suppose, for instance, that the corpses are those of men, women, slaves, hermaphrodites *[khanāthā]*, and boys. The men should take precedence, then the slaves, then the boys, then the hermaphrodites, and then the women.[375] Each class should then be inspected in detail, and rearranged if necessary, so that, within each class, those lying closest to the prayer leader *[imām]* are the most distinguished in terms of learning *[ʿilm]*, knowledge of the Qurʾān, religious devotion *[dīn]* and piety *[waraʿ]*.

When the prayer leader *[imām]* stands in his place at the head of the congregation, he must turn and look to right and left, making sure that the rows are straight, as he does in all other ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*. He must beg forgiveness of Allāh (Exalted is He), repent his sins, and remember his own mortality, as well as the abode of the Hereafter. He

[372] The form *janāza* is also used, as an acceptable alternative to *jināza*

[373] See note 324 on p. 243 above.

[374] **Author's note:** If a male corpse and a female corpse are lying next to each other, some authorities maintain that the waist of the woman should be placed opposite the chest of the man

[375] **Author's note:** According to one account of his doctrine, he [Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal] maintained that boys should take precedence over slaves.

must be thoroughly convinced that death is a cup from which he is bound to drink, and that it will inevitably be passed to him. He must therefore ensure that his inner feeling is fully conscious, and that his limbs and organs are in a state of humble submissiveness, so that he can respond to his summons with alacrity. Only then should he perform the ritual prayer for the deceased *[yuṣallī ʿala 'l-mayyit]*, in the manner now to be described:

He will begin by saying:

I am performing the ritual prayer	*uṣallī*
for this person deceased,	*ʿalā hādha 'l-mayyiti*
in fulfillment of a collective duty.	*farḍan ʿala 'l-kifāya.*

(There is no need for him to specify whether the person concerned is male or female.)

He will then pronounce four affirmations of the Supreme Greatness of Allāh *[yukabbiru arbaʿa takbīrāt]*.[176] Immediately after pronouncing the first of these, he should recite the Opening Sūra *[al-Fātiḥa]*, because Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) instructed us to recite the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* at the funeral service *[ʿala 'l-jināza]*."

After the second affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīra]*, he should invoke His blessings on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), just as he invokes them in the testimony *[tashahhud]*,[177] because Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"I asked eighteen men, from among the Companions of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), about how to conduct the ritual prayer at the funeral service *[aṣ-ṣalāt ʿala 'l-jināza]*, and all of them told me:

"'Pronounce the affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[kabbir]*. Then recite the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]*. Then pronounce the [second] affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness

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[176] The affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness is expressed by declaring: "*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]" The general term for this affirmation is *takbīr*. A specific utterance thereof is called a *takbīra*, and the term *takbīrāt* is the plural of *takbīra*.

[177] See pp. 84 and 85 above.

[kabbir]. Then invoke Allāh's blessings on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). Then pronounce the [third] affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[kabbir]*.

"'Immediately after the third affirmation, you should offer prayers of supplication for the deceased, and also for yourself, for your parents, and for the Muslims in general. Various kinds of supplication *[du'ā']* are permissible, so you may choose whichever you know best, and whichever you find easiest.'"

The recommended practice, however, is for the prayer leader *[imām]* to say:

O Allāh, forgive	*Allāhumma 'ghfir li-ḥayyi-nā*
our living and our dead,	*li-ḥayyi-nā wa mayyiti-nā*
and those of us who are present	*wa shāhidi-nā*
and those of us who are absent,	*wa ghā'ibi-nā*
and our young and our old,	*wa ṣaghīri-nā wa kabīri-nā*
and those of us who are male	*wa dhakari-nā*
and those of us who are female.	*wa unthā-nā.*

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
those of us whom You keep alive,	*man aḥyaita-hu*
let them live in accordance	*min-nā fa-aḥyi-hi*
with Islām and the Sunna,	*'ala 'l-Islāmi wa 's-Sunna:*
and those of us whom	*wa man*
You cause to die,	*tawaffaita-hu*
let them die in	*min-nā fa-tawaffa-hu*
accordance with the same.	*'alai-himā.*

You surely know	*inna-ka ta'lamu*
our destination	*munqalaba-nā*
and our final resting place,	*wa mathwā-nā*
and You are Powerful over all things.	*wa Anta 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr.*

O Allāh, he is Your servant,	*Allāhumma inna-hu 'abdu-ka*
and the son of Your servant.	*wa 'bnu 'abdi-ka*
He has now lodged with You,	*nazala bi-ka*
and You are the Best to lodge with,	*wa Anta khairu manzūlin bi-hi*
and we know nothing but good [about him].	*wa lā na'lamu illā khairā*

O Allāh, if he has been beneficent,	*Allāhumma in kāna muḥsinan*
reward him for his beneficence,	*fa-jazi-hi bi-iḥsāni-hi*
and if he has been maleficent,	*wa in kāna musī'an*
grant him an amnesty.	*fa-tajāwaz 'an-h.*

O Allāh, we have come to You	*Allāhumma innā ji'nā-ka*
as intercessors on his behalf,	*shufa'ā'a la-hu*
so accept our intercession	*fa-shaffi'-nā*

for his sake.	*fī-hi*
Protect him from the	*wa qi-hi min*
torture of the grave,	*fitnati 'l-qabri*
and from the torment of the Fire	*wa 'adhābi 'n-nāri*
[of Hell].	
Pardon him,	*wa ''fu 'an-hu*
and honor his resting place.	*wa akrim mathwā-hu*
Grant him a home	*wa abdil-hu dāran*
that is better than his [earthly] home,	*khairan min dāri-hi*
and an environment that is better	*wa jiwāran*
than his [earthly] environment.	*khairan min jiwāri-hi*
And do the same for us	*wa 'f'al dhālika bi-nā*
and for all the Muslims.	*wa bi-jamī'i 'l-muslimīn.*
O Allāh, do not deprive us	*Allāhumma lā taḥrim-nā*
of his recompense,	*ajra-hu*
and do not desert us after him.	*wa lā taftin-nā ba'da-h.*

Immediately after the fourth affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīra]*, the prayer leader *[imām]* should say:

O Allāh, our Lord, give us	*Allāhumma Rabba-nā āti-nā*
in this world that which is good,	*fi 'd-dunyā ḥasanatan*
and in the Hereafter	*wa fi 'l-ākhirati*
that which is good,	*ḥasanatan*
and guard us against	*wa qi-nā*
the torment of the Fire	*'adhāba 'n-nār.*
[of Hell]. (2:201)[178]	

(Among our fellow [Ḥanbalī] scholars, however, there are some who maintain that the prayer leader *[imām]* should stand still for a little while [after the fourth affirmation], without saying anything at all [before the salutation].)

He should then pronounce a single salutation *[taslīma]*,[179] while turning his face to his right. If he pronounces two salutations [one to the right and then one to the left], this is also permissible. The twofold salutation is preferred by the school *[madhhab]* of Imām ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), while the single salutation *[taslīma]* represents the preference of our Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

[178] The word *Allāhumma* [O Allāh] is not part of the Qur'ānic quotation.

[179] In other words, the prayer leader *[imām]* should say:

Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh	*as-salāmu 'alaikum wa raḥmatu 'llāh*

[naqd] and annulment *[faskh]* of the *witr* prayer [as a separate, odd-numbered entity]:

- The person concerned performs the *witr* in the first part of the night, as a ritual prayer consisting of one single cycle.
- He goes to sleep.
- He gets up in the course of the night, in order to perform more ritual prayers.
- He performs one single cycle of ritual prayer *[rak'a wāhida]*, with the specific intention that it should invalidate [the separate, odd-numbered status of] his previous *witr*, and convert it into the first of two elements forming a pair.
- He pronounces the concluding salutation [to mark the completion of this latest cycle of prayer], so now all his prayers up to this point have become even-numbered.
- He may then go on to perform further prayers, as many as he wishes, so long as they are in sets of two cycles *[mathnā mathnā]*.
- Finally, he may perform the *witr* before the rising of the dawn *[ṭulū' al-fajr]*, by completing one single, unpaired cycle of ritual prayer *[rak'a wāḥida]*.

That is all quite clear, in light of the practice of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), which we have described above [in the preceding subsection.]

It is not permissible to leave the first *witr* in its original condition, and then perform the *witr* a second time, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> There must not be two performances of the *witr* in a single night.

As for the case where someone does not render his *witr* invalid, but simply goes on to perform whatever [even-numbered] prayers he wishes, we have already explained the permissibility thereof.

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8.
The ritual prayer at the funeral service *[aṣ-ṣalāt ʿala 'l-jināza]*.

As for the ritual prayer at the funeral service *[aṣ-ṣalāt ʿala 'l-jināza]*,[372] it is a collective duty *[farḍ ʿala 'l-kifāya]*.[373] According to our [Ḥanbalī] doctrine, the person best qualified to lead this prayer is the executor *[waṣī]* of the deceased, followed by the head of state *[sulṭān]*, then by the male relatives of the deceased, in order of closeness.

The prayer leader *[imām]* should stand opposite the chest of a male corpse, and opposite the waist of a female.

If there are several corpses, they should be arranged so that their heads are in line with one another.[374] If they are of various classes, they should be arranged in order of priority, with the most distinguished lying closest to the prayer leader *[imām]*. Suppose, for instance, that the corpses are those of men, women, slaves, hermaphrodites *[khanāthā]*, and boys. The men should take precedence, then the slaves, then the boys, then the hermaphrodites, and then the women.[375] Each class should then be inspected in detail, and rearranged if necessary, so that, within each class, those lying closest to the prayer leader *[imām]* are the most distinguished in terms of learning *[ʿilm]*, knowledge of the Qurʾān, religious devotion *[dīn]* and piety *[waraʿ]*.

When the prayer leader *[imām]* stands in his place at the head of the congregation, he must turn and look to right and left, making sure that the rows are straight, as he does in all other ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*. He must beg forgiveness of Allāh (Exalted is He), repent his sins, and remember his own mortality, as well as the abode of the Hereafter. He

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[372] The form *janāza* is also used, as an acceptable alternative to *jināza*.

[373] See note 324 on p. 243 above.

[374] **Author's note:** If a male corpse and a female corpse are lying next to each other, some authorities maintain that the waist of the woman should be placed opposite the chest of the man.

[375] **Author's note:** According to one account of his doctrine, he [Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal] maintained that boys should take precedence over slaves.

He should then complete the supplication *[du'ā']*, [using the feminine form of the pronoun, etc., wherever necessary].

The person best entitled to conduct the funeral service—according to the doctrine of our Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him)—is the person appointed to the task by the deceased, in his last will and testament. Second in line is the ruler or governor *[wālī]*. After that, the order of precedence is as follows:

1. The closest male relative in the direct line of ascent, viz., the father, the father's father, and so on, by however many generations.
2. The closest male relative in the direct line of descent, viz., the son, the son's son, and so on, by however many generations.
3. The closest male collateral, viz., the brother, the brother's son, the paternal uncle, the son of the paternal uncle.

Should the husband take precedence over the son? On this point there are two conflicting opinions.

The Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* (may Allāh be well pleased with them all) usually bequeathed the task of conducting their funeral prayer *[aṣ-ṣalāt 'alai-him]* to a person named in their last will and testament. For instance, as we know from traditional reports:

Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) bequeathed the task of conducting his funeral prayer *[waṣṣā an yuṣaliyya 'alai-hi]* to 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) bequeathed the task of conducting his funeral prayer to Ṣuhaib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), even though his own son, 'Abdu'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him), was alive and available.

Shuraih bequeathed the task of conducting his funeral prayer to Zaid ibn al-Arqam.

Maisara bequeathed the task of conducting his funeral prayer to Shuraih.

[The Prophet's wife] 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) appointed Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) as her executor.

[The Prophet's wife] Umm Salama (may Allāh be well pleased with her) bequeathed the task of conducting her funeral prayer *[waṣṣat an yuṣaliyya 'alai-hā]* to Sa'īd ibn Jubair.

When the supplication *[du'ā']* is offered on behalf of an infant, the prayer leader *[imām]* should say:

O Allāh, he is Your servant,	*Allāhumma inna-hu 'abdu-ka*
and the son of Your servant,	*wa 'bnu 'abdi-ka*
and the son of Your maidservant.	*wa 'bnu amati-ka*
You created him and nourished him.	*Anta khalaqta-hu wa razaqta-hu*
You caused him to die,	*wa Anta amatta-hu*
and You will restore him to life.	*wa Anta tuḥyī-h.*

O Allāh, let him be for his parents	*Allāhumma 'j'al-hu li-wālidai-hi*
a predecessor and a treasure,	*salafan wa dhukhran*
a precursor and a recompense.	*wa faraṭan wa ajran*
Let him weigh heavy in their scales,	*wa thaqqil bi-hi mawāzīna-humā*
and enhance their rewards	*wa 'aẓẓim bi-hi*
on his account.	*ujūra-humā.*

Deprive neither us	*wa lā taḥrim-nā*
nor the two of them	*wa iyyā-humā*
of his recompense,	*ajra-hu*
and desert neither us	*wa lā taftin-nā*
nor them, after him.	*wa iyyā-humā ba'da-h.*

O Allāh, join him together with	*Allāhumma alḥiq-hu*
the righteous believers of the past,	*bi-ṣāliḥi salafi 'l-mu'minīna*
in the custody of Abraham.	*fī kafālati Ibrāhīma*
Grant him a home	*wa abdil-hu dāran*
that is better than his [earthly] home,	*khairan min dāri-hi*
and a family that is better	*wa ahlan khairan*
than his [earthly] family,	*min ahli-hi*
and save him from	*wa 'āfi-hi min*
the torment of Hell.	*'adhābi Jahannam.*

O Allāh, forgive	*Allāhumma 'ghfir*
our children who die before us,	*li-afrāṭi-nā*
and our ancestors,	*wa aslāfi-nā*
and those who have	*wa man sabaqa-nā*
preceded us in faith.	*bi-'l-īmān.*

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
those of us whom You keep alive,	*man aḥyaita-hu min-nā*
let them live	*fa-aḥyi-hi*
in accordance with Islām,	*'ala 'l-Islām:*
and those of us	*wa man*
whom You cause to die,	*tawaffaita-hu min-nā*
let them die in faith.	*fa-tawaffa-hu 'ala 'l-īmān.*

Forgive the believing men	*wa 'ghfir li'l-mu'minīna*
and the believing women:	*wa 'l-mu'mināti 'l-aḥyā'i*
those of them who are still alive,	*min-hum*
as well as those who are dead.	*wa 'l-amwāt.*

In the case of a miscarried fetus *[siqṭ]*, the funeral prayer and ritual washing may also be required, but only if it has developed to the point where the shape of a human being is already apparent. If it is merely a piece of flesh, in which no embryonic form can be discerned, it should simply be buried, with neither ritual washing nor funeral prayer. When ritual washing is legally required [*yushra‘u fī-hi ’l-ghusl*], in a case of this sort, it does not matter whether the washing is performed by a man or by a woman, because it is traditionally reported that Ibrāhīm, the son of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), died at the age of eighteen months, and the women washed his corpse.

◆

Concerning the proper treatment of someone whose moment of death has arrived, and the procedures to be followed in the ritual washing *[ghusl]*, enshrouding *[takfīn]*, embalming *[taḥnīṭ]* and burial *[dafn]* of his corpse.

a.

Concerning the preparations a true believer *[mu'min]* should make, in order to be ready for his own inevitable death.

For every intelligent believer *[mu'min]*, convinced of the certainty of death, it is commendable to remember death frequently, and to prepare for it. He should maintain a state of readiness and vigilant anticipation, through the hourly renewal of repentance, through self-examination, through disengagement from wrongs and debts, and by writing a definitive testamentary disposition. He should not be heedless of this sure and certain fact, general and universal in its significance for all humanity, for there is no escape from its arrival, its onslaught and its advent, and it is a cup from which all are bound to drink.

When we say that it is commendable for him to practice this advice, we do so for the simple reason that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> Remember often the wrecker of delights *[hāzim al-ladhdhāt]* [160]

—and, in another wording:

> Remember death often, for if you remember it in affluence, it will shake your confidence in wealth, and if you remember it in straitened circumstances, it will make your hardship easier to bear.

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[160] As the German scholar Bauer has pointed out, "the wrecker of delights *[hāzim / hādim / hādhim al-ladhdhāt]*" became the standard epithet of Death in the stories of *A Thousand and One Nights [Alf laila wa laila]*.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Do you know which is the cleverest of all people, and which is the most prudent? The cleverest of them is the one who most frequently remembers death, and the most prudent of them is the one who prepares for it most frequently.

"O Messenger of Allāh," his listeners asked, "what symptom is indicative of that?" So he replied:

> Utter indifference to the abode of delusion *[dār al-ghurūr]*, and keen interest in the abode of eternity *[dār al-khulūd]*.

Luqmān[81] (peace be upon him) said to his son:

"O my dear son, do not put off repentance till tomorrow, for death may come and take you by surprise."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> By what right does a man of property spend two whole nights, without having his will and testament written in his presence?

—and:

> Call yourselves to account before you are called to account, and weigh your own selves before they are weighed.

ʿAbdu'llāh ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: "I heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> "'For the sake of your worldly interests, work as if you are going to live forever, and for your interest in the Hereafter, work as if you are going to die tomorrow.'"

The intelligent believer *[mu'min]* must therefore strive to acquit himself, before death comes, of all his outstanding obligations, whether they be sins and wrongs committed, or debts incurred. If he fails to do so, he must recognize and acknowledge the fact that he will be taken in pledge for those obligations. He must realize that, before very long, he will be chastised and punished in his grave. All his energies will then be cut off, and his faculties and senses will be out of action. His relatives and his neighbors will dissociate themselves from him, and his enemies and friends—men, women and children alike—will conspire to gain control of his property.

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[81] Luqmān is commonly known as Luqmān the Wise *[Luqmān al-Ḥakīm]*, because Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us in the Qur'ān:

> And We did indeed give Luqmān wisdom. *wa la-qad ātainā Luqmāna 'l-ḥikmata*
> (31:12)

To save himself from the consequences of leaving obligations unfulfilled, he must therefore do whatever he can to discharge them while he is still in this world, by making payment [*adhāʾ*], appealing for absolution [*istiḥlāl*],[182] expressing repentance [*tauba*], and demonstrating his willingness to make concessions [*idhʿān*]. Nothing else can save him from those consequences, apart from the covering provided by the All-Compassionate [*ar-Raḥīm*], through His Kindness [*Raʾfa*] and His Mercy [*Raḥma*]. Since He is the Most Merciful of the merciful [*Arḥam ar-Rāḥimīn*], He may compensate the claimants with whatever He wills in the Abode of Eternity and the Gardens of Paradise.

Samura ibn Jundab (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

"We were in the company of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) when he conducted the ritual prayer at a funeral service [*ṣallā ʿalā jināza*]. When he was leaving, he said: 'Is there anyone here who belongs to the family of So-and-so?' A man said: 'I do,' so he (blessing and peace be upon him) said to him: 'So-and-so is held as a prisoner because of his debt.'

"As I then observed, his family, and others who were mourning over him, got up and took to settling debts on his behalf, until there was no one left who had any claim against him."

In another version of this traditional report, the wording is: "So-and-so is held in confinement at the gate of the Garden of Paradise, because of an unpaid debt of his."

[182] In Vol. 2, p. 159, Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained:

> It is strictly necessary for the penitent to acquaint his victim with the full extent of each offense he has committed against him, and he must not give him an ambiguous description of any of the wrongs to which he is confessing. A vaguely worded plea for absolution [*istiḥlāl*] is not sufficient in such cases, because it is always possible that the injured party [*maẓlūm*], if he came to know all the facts concerning the extent of his injury, would not feel disposed to waive his right to exact retribution. He might prefer to postpone that retribution to the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], in order to receive his compensation by having good deeds transferred to his account from that of his malefactor, or by having some of his own bad deeds transferred to the debit scale of the latter.
>
> This rule does not apply, however, if the victim would suffer further injury from the knowledge of every specific item in the whole catalog of offenses against him. For instance, the offender would only add to the harm he had already caused, if he told his victim that he was guilty of sexual misconduct [*zinā*] with his maidservant or his wife, or that he had spread rumors about some hidden defect in his character. In cases like this, the penitent has no alternative but to couch his plea for absolution in rather vague terms. Even if he succeeds in obtaining the pardon he seeks, he will still be in debt to his victim because of a certain element of unrequited wrong, so he must repair that wrong by performing good deeds, just as he would have to repair the wrong if his victim happened to be dead or otherwise absent beyond his reach.

28.

Concerning what is required of someone who notices that another person is performing his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* incorrectly.

If someone happens to notice that another person is not performing his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* correctly, especially if he sees him omitting some of its basic essentials *[arkān]*[292] and necessary elements *[wājibāt]*,[293] as well as its customary refinements *[ādāb]*,[294] it is incumbent upon the observer to admonish him, to make him aware of his shortcomings, and to offer him sound advice, so that he may correct his mistakes from that time on, and seek forgiveness for those he has made in the past. If the observer fails to do this, he will be counted as a partner *[sharīk]* in the culprit's misconduct, and will thus be charged with the burden of the latter's guilt and sin.

As we are informed in the tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Woe betide the learned *['ālim]* on account of the ignorant *[jāhil]*, inasmuch as the former fails to teach the latter.

If it had not been the case that teaching the ignorant *[jāhil]* is incumbent upon the man of learning *['ālim]*, as a strict obligation and a prescribed religious duty, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would not have threatened him with woe, as the dire consequence of his failure to provide instruction. In order to deserve such a threat *[wa'īd]*, a person must be guilty of failing to carry out a duty that is strictly incumbent *[wājib]* and obligatory *[farḍ]*, as opposed to one that is merely voluntary and supererogatory *[nafl]*.

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[292] See note 291 on p. 216 above.

[293] See note 291 on p. 216 above.

[294] In this context, the term *ādāb* [good manners, proprieties] is obviously meant to cover those elements in the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* that are customary and highly recommended, though not absolutely essential to its validity.

b.
Concerning the treatment of a fellow believer *[mu'min]* who is sick, and who seems unlikely to recover.

If a fellow believer *[mu'min]* has fallen sick, it is commendable to pay him a visit.

When his Muslim brother visits the sick person, he should examine his condition carefully, and if he finds evidence to suggest that he is likely to recover from his illness, the visitor should offer a prayer of supplication on his behalf *[da'ā la-hu]*, then take his leave.

If, on the other hand, the visitor has reason to fear that the sick person's death may be imminent, he should encourage him to repent his sins, and to make a testamentary disposition *[waṣiyya]*, bequeathing one third of his property to the poor among those of his relatives who will not inherit from him automatically.[385] If all those relatives are rich, the bequest should be made in favor of the poor and the needy [in the community at large], and the people of learning *['ilm]* and virtue *[faḍl]* and religion *[dīn]*. It should be made in favor of those whom destiny *[qadar]* has deprived of material means *[asbāb]*, and whom pious restraint *[wara']* has inhibited from taking an active interest in their acquisition.

From the viewpoint of such pious paupers, the material means *[asbāb]* have turned into lords *[arbāb]*, so they have abandoned them, insistently declaring that the Lord *[ar-Rabb]* (Glory be to Him) can have no partner *[sharīk]*, and resorting directly to Him for sustenance. Their property has thus become reliance on the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He), and renunciation of what is in the hands of people. Their affirmation of Oneness *[tauḥīd]* is thus preserved intact, and they yearn for Him with all parts of their being, purely and spontaneously, without penalty in this world or punishment in the Hereafter. So congratulations to anyone who grants them a gift, or makes them a present, or treats them with gracious favor, or spends a day in their service, or devotes an hour to saying "*āmīn*" to their prayer of supplication *[ammana 'alā du'ā'i-him]*, or seizes an opportunity to speak well of them. Congratulations to him, and congratulations to him yet again!

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[385] In accordance with the Islāmic law of inheritance, the estate of a deceased Muslim is distributed automatically to the prescribed heirs. The power of testamentary disposition *[waṣiyya]* is restricted to a maximum of one third of a Muslim's property. (For details of the Islāmic rules of inheritance, see *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, arts. FARĀ'IḌ, MĪRĀTH and WAṢIYA.)

He deserves to be congratulated because they are the people of Allāh, because they are His favored elite *[khāssa]*. Who can gain access to the presence of the king, without the assistance of his favored élite? How can one receive recompense from the ruler *[sultān]*, except by way of his attendants and his servants? If someone establishes friendly relations with the attendants and servants, treats them well and serves their interests, they will soon introduce him to the King Almighty *[al-Malik al-A'ẓam]*, at which point every one of them will mention his good qualities and refer to his noble deeds. The King will then bestow gracious favors upon him, in recompense for the beneficial services and meritorious acts he has performed.

So, if the symptom of death is clearly apparent, it is recommended that a member of the sick person's family should remain constantly by his side. The relative who undertakes this task should be the one who is most kindly disposed toward him, the one who is most familiar with his traits of character and the factors that govern his behavior, and the one who is most conscious of his duty to his Lord, so that he can make him aware of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and encourage him to obey Him by attending to the matters we have discussed above. He should take care to maintain the moisture of the dying person's throat, by keeping it supplied with drops of water or some other suitable liquid, and he should use a piece of damp cotton to wet his lips. He should also prompt him to say, one time at least: "There is no god but Allāh *[lā ilāha illa 'llāh]*." He should not urge him to say it more than three times, however, in case the effort makes him irritated and disturbed, with the result that his spirit departs while he is feeling an aversion to that. If he prompts him to say these words, but then the dying person utters something else, he should repeat his prompting, to ensure that his final utterance will be: "There is no god but Allāh *[lā ilāha illa 'llāh]*." For, as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> If someone's last words are: "There is no god but Allāh *[lā ilāha illa 'llāh]*," that person will enter the Garden of Paradise.

The attendant relative should do his prompting in a gentle and coaxing manner. It is also appropriate for him to recite in his presence the Sūra entitled *Yā Sīn*, so that it can be an aid to the departure of his spirit, and so that it can make the experience easier for him to bear.[196]

As soon as his spirit has departed, his attendant should arrange the body of the deceased so that he is stretched out on his back, with his face toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca], in other words, in such a manner that his face will be toward it when he is caused to sit up. Then he should waste no time in closing the eyes of the deceased, because, as we know from the traditional report of Shaddād ibn Aws (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When you approach your dead, you must be sure to close their eyes, for the eyesight follows the spirit. And say something good, for he will say "āmīn" to what is said by the members of the family, then he will clamp his jawbones tight.

As for the manner in which the eyes of the dead should be closed, we have a description of it in the following traditional report: When [the Caliph] 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) realized that he was at the point of death, he said to his son 'Abdu'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him): "Stand close beside me. Then, when you see that my spirit has reached my uvula, place the palm of your right hand upon my forehead, [draw it down] beneath my chin, and close my eyes."

Next, the attendant should loosen the joints of the deceased, by moving his forearms back until they come in contact with his upper arms, then putting them straight again. He should bend his legs to meet his thighs, and move his thighs up to his stomach, then return them to their normal positions.

He should remove the clothes of the deceased, and shroud him in a garment that covers his entire body, because the whole of him becomes a private part *['aura]* by reason of death. This is why it is necessary to conceal the whole of his body in the shroud.

A heavy object, such as a mirror or a sword, should also be placed upon his stomach, because the corpse of the deceased becomes puffed up and inflated when his spirit has departed.

Then he should be laid out on the bench for his ritual washing *[ghusl]*, arranged so that his body is sloping down toward his feet.

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[196] The Sūra entitled *Yā Sīn* is the 36th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

12. He must shun altercation with ignorant fools, and respond to their nonsense by saying: "O Allāh, let there be peace! *[Allāhumma salāmā]*."[259]

13. While other people should find him to be a reassuring source of comfort, his feeling about himself must be one of grave concern, as he yearns for deliverance and strives for his personal salvation.

14. He must acknowledge that he is being put to the test, recognize the magnitude of the challenge he faces, and understand the momentous significance and enormous importance of the task assigned to him. His overriding concern must therefore be to discharge the solemn responsibility laid upon him, by proving himself worthy of the great dignity of the prayer leader's rôle *[imāma]*, its tremendous value, and its beneficial quality.

15. He must be a man of few words, except when he needs to speak about matters relating to his sphere of interest.

16. [He must be aware that] there is a state of being *[ḥāl]* that is appropriate for him [as prayer leader], and a state of being that is appropriate for the people [who follow his lead].

17. When he stands in his prayer-niche *[miḥrāb]*, he must realize that he is standing in the station of the Prophets *[maqām an-Nabiyyīn]* and of the Caliph of the Chief of the Messengers *[Khalīfa Sayyid al-Mursalīn]*, and that he is communing with the Lord of All the Worlds *[yunājī Rabb al-'Ālamīn]*.

18. He must exercise his independent judgment *[ijtihād]*,[260] in order to ensure the complete performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and also to ensure the well-being of those behind him, meaning those who are following his leadership *[imāma]*.

19. He must keep the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* as short and simple as possible, without prejudice to its completeness.

20. He must conduct the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* in a way that accommodates the weakest member of the congregation. This means that he must regard himself as inferior to those who pray behind him, recognizing that their leadership *[imāma]* has been assigned to him as a test, and realizing that Allāh (Exalted is He) will hold him responsible for the performance of the obligatory duties *[farā'iḍ]*, not just on his own account, but also on that of the weakest member of the congregation.

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[259] This is a clear allusion to Q. 25:63.

[260] See note 177 on p. 132 above.

c.

Concerning the ritual washing *[ghusl]*, grooming *[tajhīz]*, shrouding *[takfīn]* and burial *[dafn]* of the deceased.

As soon as the abovementioned matters have been duly attended to, no time should be wasted in performing the ritual washing *[ghusl]* of the deceased, followed by his grooming *[tajhīz]*, his shrouding *[takfīn]* and his burial *[dafn]*. There should be no delay, unless the person's death has occurred suddenly and unexpectedly, in which case these actions must be postponed until his death has been established with absolute certainty. His palms must be unclenched, his legs unbent, his nose running, and his temples sunk into his head; only then can the process be expedited.

As for the ritual washing *[ghusl]*, it may be described as follows:

The ritual washer *[ghāsil]* must lay the corpse bare, though keeping it veiled from the navel to the knees, because this is most convenient for him, and most conducive to a really thorough washing. He must avert his gaze as much as possible, especially from the area of the private parts *['aura]*. (Some authorities maintain that it is most appropriate for him to wash the corpse inside a loosely fitting gown, made from a light material. If it proves to be too tight, he can always split the stitching at the top of the panels.)

Then he must gently loosen its joints, if it is easy for him to do so. If not, he should leave them alone, because the use of force might result in their being broken, and the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> Breaking the bone of the corpse is like breaking it when the person is alive.

Then he should bend the dead body slightly, enough to bring it close to the sitting position. He should then squeeze its belly, applying only gentle pressure.

Next, he should wrap a rag around his hand, as a precaution against touching the private region *['awra]* of the corpse with his hand, and also because the rag is a more effective means of removing the dirt, on account of its rough surface. He is likewise recommended to avoid touching the rest of the body, except with the rag. He should keep pouring water over his hand, then throw the rag away and replace it with one that is clean. Then, after repeating this process three times, he should discard the rag completely, and give his hand a thorough wash.

He should then proceed to give the corpse the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* that is normally performed in preparation for the ritual prayer *[salāt]*, following the prescribed sequence. This means that he must begin by formulating the intention, and then invoke the Name of Allāh. He must insert his two fingers, wet with water, between the lips of the corpse, and rub its teeth. He must do the same with its nostrils, in order to clean them out. He must pour water over its mouth and its nose, as if for the actions called *maḍmaḍa* [moving water all around inside the mouth, then spitting it out and ejecting it] and *istinshāq* [snuffing water up the nostrils, then blowing it out]—except that the water will not actually enter the mouth and nose of the corpse.

He must proceed in this fashion, until he has performed the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* on the last member of the body [for which it is prescribed]. Next, when he has finished that part of his task, he must wash the head of the corpse with water and the ground leaves of the lotus tree *[sidr]*. Then he must wash its beard. He should not comb the hair, however.

Then he must pour fresh water over the entire body, from its head to its feet, and thoroughly wash its right side. Then he must turn it over to the left, and give its left side a thorough wash. He must wash the rest of the body in similar fashion, using water and lotus leaves in each act of washing, but he should also wipe it dry immediately after each washing with lotus leaves and fresh water. If he needs waterskins for washing dirt away, and a spike for cleaning out what lies beneath the nails of fingers and toes, he may use such implements. He may also wrap cotton around the spike, in order to remove unpleasant substances from the nose and the ear canals, and to make them properly clean.

Then [having completed the first washing of the corpse] he should begin the process all over again. He should bend the body, then repeat its ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* a second time, in the manner we have described.

Then [having completed the second washing of the corpse] he should wash it for the last time, using water containing camphor. Then he must wipe it dry with a piece of cloth.

(The corpse must be washed at least three times, and seven times at most. If three washings are not sufficient to make it properly clean, it should therefore be given extra washings, up to a maximum of seven. Whatever the final total, however, it must always be an odd number, in other words, three or five or seven.)

If something is excreted from the corpse after that [third washing], the washing should be repeated up to seven times. If that is still not enough to put a stop to the excretion, the orifice should be plugged with cotton, and covered with a patch and hot perfume. According to some of our fellow [Ḥanbalī] scholars, however, the corpse should not be plugged, because Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) disapproved of the practice.

According to certain authorities, if something is excreted from the corpse after the washing has been completed, the entire process of washing should not be repeated. Further washing should rather be confined to the place of the impurity.

Then the corpse should be given the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* that is normally performed in preparation for the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, wrapped in its shroud, and carried to the place of burial.

The best practice is to perform the first washing of the corpse with water and ground lotus leaves *[sidr]*, and the rest of the washings with pure water, as in the ritual ablution normally performed to remove a state of major impurity *[ghusl al-janāba]*. Camphor should be added in the final washing, then the corpse should be wiped dry and wrapped in its shroud.

◆

The shrouding *[takfīn]* of the corpse.

As for the shrouding *[takfīn]* of the corpse, three pieces of cloth are used for the purpose of wrapping it completely. They must be plain white sheets *[lafā'if]*. They must not include any kind of shirt or gown *[qamīṣ]*, waist wrapper *[mi'zar]*, baggy trouser pants *[sarāwīl]*, or anything stitched or sewn. The sheets themselves may be stitched, however, if the available cloth would otherwise be too narrow and too small.

The sheets must be spread out, one on top of the other, after they have been fumigated with aloeswood *['ūd]*, incense *[nadd]*[187] and camphor *[kāfūr]*. Perfume should also be placed between each pair of sheets.

According to certain authorities, however, the corpse must be shrouded in a gown *[qamīṣ]*, a waist wrapper *[mi'zar]* and a sheet *[lafīfa]*. The waist wrapper should be next to the skin of the corpse, and the gown should not be buttoned up over it.

Three pieces of plain cloth are more appropriate, in view of the fact that [the Prophet's wife] 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was shrouded in three pieces of white cotton cloth, none of them being a gown *[qamīṣ]* or a turban *['imāma]*."

Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) confirmed the authenticity of the tradition *[ḥadīth]* of 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), and he based his doctrine *[madhhab]* upon it.

The perfume, consisting of an embalming mixture *[ḥanūṭ]*[188] and camphor, should then be placed in a piece of cotton. Some of this should be inserted between the buttocks of the corpse, and kept there by fixing a rag on top of it. The rest of it should be applied to the parts of the body that touch the ground in the act of prostration *[sujūd]*,[109] and to places where the skin is creased, like the thighs, under the armpits, the facial apertures, the ear holes, the brow, the knees, the palms of the hands, and the area outside the eyes. The embalmer must not insert the mixture into the eyes themselves. If he is afraid that the state of purity may be annulled, and that what is inside the body may be excreted to the outside, he should plug the inside of the nose and the ear holes with cotton and camphor. If he perfumes the whole of the corpse with camphor and sandalwood, that is even better. As we learn from the traditional report of Nāfi', Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) used to apply musk to the creases and elbows of the corpse.

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[187] According to some of the classical Arabic lexicographers, the term *nadd* or *nidd* is applied to a compound of aloeswood aromatized with musk, ambergris and frankincense. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *N–D–D*.)

[188] According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the term *ḥanūṭ* is applied to "odoriferous substances of any kind that are mixed for a corpse, in particular, or for grave-clothes and for the bodies of the dead, consisting of musk, or ambergris, or camphor, or Indian cane, or sandalwood, bruised…, and other things that are sprinkled upon it for the purpose of perfuming it and drying up its moisture." (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *Ḥ–N–Ṭ*.)

Next, he should fetch the corpse and set it down on the sheets. He should fold one edge of the uppermost sheet over the right side of the corpse, then pull the other edge over its left side, thereby wrapping it completely in the sheet. Then he should do the same with the second and third sheets in turn, placing the one beside his head away from the one beside his feet. Then, having tucked the top edges together as they are tucked in a turban, he should repeat the process over the face and the feet, unless he has reason to fear that the tucked edges could come apart, in which case he should knot them together. Then, when the corpse is laid in the grave, he should untie the knots, without creating any gap in the shroud *[kafan]*.

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[109] The act of prostration *[sujūd]* is performed during the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> I have been commanded to perform the act of prostration *[sujūd]* by resting on seven bones.

That is to say: (1) the skull bone in the forehead, (2,3) the bones in the two hands, (4,5) the two kneecaps, and (6,7) the bones in the two big toes.

The shrouding *[takfīn]* of a female corpse.

As for the corpse of a woman, it must be shrouded in five pieces of cloth, namely, a shawl *[izār]*, a smock or chemise *[dir‘]*, a head-and-face veil *[khimār]*, and two plain sheets *[lifāfatain]*. Her corpse must be wrapped in these completely, and the shawl alone must be big enough to envelop her entire body.

According to some of our fellow [Ḥanbalī] scholars, it is recommended that a fifth piece of cloth should be used in her case, for the purpose of binding her thighs together. [The pieces are still five in number] so this will take the place of one of the two sheets.

The hair of the female corpse should be braided in three plaits, and should be arranged so that it hangs down behind her. Both the male and the female should be treated to the kind of preparation given to a bride or bridegroom.

If the circumstances are such that it is not feasible to provide the female corpse with all that we have mentioned, even one single piece of cloth can serve the necessary purpose.

* * *

The washing, shrouding and burial of a ritually consecrated pilgrim *[muḥrim]*.

As for the ritually consecrated pilgrim *[muḥrim]*, his corpse should be washed with water and ground lotus leaves *[sidr]*. It should not have perfume applied to it. Neither the head nor the feet should be veiled, and the corpse should not be clothed in anything that has been stitched or sewn. It must be shrouded only in the two pieces of cloth [worn by the pilgrim in a state of consecration], because Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

"Suddenly, while Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was waiting at 'Arafa, a man who was also waiting there [as a pilgrim] fell down from his riding camel, and the animal broke his neck. So Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

> "'Wash him with water and ground lotus leaves *[sidr]*, and shroud him in the two pieces of cloth he is wearing [as a ritually consecrated pilgrim]. Do not veil his head, for, when Allāh brings him forth on the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*, he will be uttering the pilgrim's cry of readiness to serve his Lord *[mulabbiyan]*.'"[190]

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[190] That is to say, he will be pronouncing the *talbiya* [expression of willing compliance]. In the context of the Pilgrimage *[Hajj]*, the term *talbiya* refers to the declaration, repeatedly uttered by the pilgrim:

Doubly at Your service, O Allāh!	*labbaika Allāhumma*
Doubly at Your service!	*labbaik*
No partner have You!	*lā sharīka laka*
Doubly at Your service!	*labbaik*
Yours is the praise and the gracious favor,	*inna 'l-ḥamda wa 'n-ni'mata laka*
and Yours is the kingdom!	*wa 'l-mulka lak*
No partner have You!	*lā sharīka lak.*

The ritual washing of the miscarried fetus *[ghusl as-siqt]*.

As for the miscarried fetus *[siqt]*, if it is delivered after more than four months in the womb, it should be given a ritual washing and a funeral prayer.[99] If it is not clear whether it is a male or a female, it should be given a name that is equally suitable for a person of either sex.

In a case of this sort, it does not matter whether the washing is performed by a man or by a woman, because the women washed the corpse of Ibrāhīm, the son of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), when he died at the age of eighteen months. This fact is mentioned in the tradition *[hadīth]* of Umm 'Atiyya (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

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[99] As Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained on pp. 279–80:

> In the case of a miscarried fetus *[siqt]*, the funeral prayer and ritual washing may also be required, but only if it has developed to the point where the shape of a human being is already apparent. If it is merely a piece of flesh, in which no embryonic form can be discerned, it should simply be buried, with neither ritual washing nor funeral prayer.

upright posture. When the prayer leader *[imām]* prostrates himself in the second cycle, the row to remain standing should be the first of the rows that performed the prostration with him in the first cycle. This row must now keep watch over the others, until the prayer leader *[imām]* adopts the sitting posture to pronounce the testimony *[tashahhud]*, at which point they must join him in the testimony. They should follow him, therefore, so that he can lead all of them together in the final salutation.

According to traditional report, this is how the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) conducted the prayer, when danger threatened at ʿUsfān [a place near Mecca].

As a permissible alternative, in the second cycle, the first row can move to the rear, while the second row moves forward and takes its place, in order to stand guard in front.

If the danger is extremely intense, and the combat is being waged at very close quarters, the troops may pray in congregation, or as separate individuals, in whatever manner they find possible under the circumstances: walking or riding, facing the *Qibla* or with their backs to it, by making gestures or without making gestures. As to whether or not they are required to face the *Qibla* at the very beginning of the prayer *[ṣalāt]*, there are two conflicting traditional reports.

Then, if safety is assured, and the enemy is routed, they should bring their prayer *[ṣalāt]* to completion. They should dismount from their riding beasts, turning to face the *Qibla* as they do so.

If they embark on the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* with a sense of security, but then grave danger suddenly threatens, they should mount up and complete the prayer of danger *[ṣalāt al-khauf]*, even if they need to strike and thrust, as they charge to and fro in battle.

This form of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* is permissible for anyone who is in danger of being attacked by any kind of enemy, including savage beasts, torrential floods, highway robbers, and other such menacing threats. According to one of two conflicting reports, it is likewise permissible if he is in pursuit of the enemy, and in danger of letting him escape, just when his defeat is imminent.

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Defraying the cost of the shroud *[kafan]*.

As a charge on a man's estate, the cost of his shroud *[kafan]* takes precedence over the settlement of his debts and the distribution of his testamentary disposition *[wasiyya]*. If he has no property, the cost must be defrayed by the person responsible for his maintenance. If there is no such person, the expense must be met from the public treasury *[bait al-māl]*. The same applies to the cost of a woman's shroud, which is not incumbent upon her husband.

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The burial *[dafn]*.

The best practice is for the burial *[dafn]* of the corpse to be carried out by the same person who took charge of its ritual washing *[ghusl]*. The grave *[qabr]* should be dug to the depth of one fathom *[qāma]*[393] and an arm's length *[busta]*. Its length should be three cubits and a span, and in width it should measure one cubit *[dhirā']*[394] and a span *[shibr]*.[395] This is in accordance with the words addressed by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> How will it be for you, when a hole in the ground is made ready to receive you, three cubits and a span [in length] by one cubit and a span in width? Then your family will approach you, to wash you and shroud you and embalm you. Then they will carry you [to your grave], in order to bury you in it. Then they will pile the earth on top of you. Then they will go away and leave you....[396]

Following the recommended practice, the corpse should be drawn headforemost from the bier. If this is too difficult, however, it may be taken from the side of the grave, or from whichever direction happens to be easiest. This is in accordance with one report of the doctrine of Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

As for the corpse of a women, its burial *[dafn]* should be carried out by women, just as they take charge of its ritual washing *[ghusl]*. If this is impracticable in a particular instance, the task should be performed by men who are closely related to her. If this is also unfeasible, it should be carried out by old men who are unrelated to her.

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[393] The *qāma* [fathom] is equal to six feet.

[394] As a unit of length, the Arabic term *dhirā'*—like the medieval English cubit—is based on the length of the forearm from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. While it is usually equal to about 18 inches, it sometimes signifies a length of 21 inches or even more. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *DH–R–'*.)

[395] A span *[shibr]* is defined by the Arabic lexicographers as "the space between the extremity of the thumb and the little finger, when extended apart in the usual manner." (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *SH–B–R*.)

[396] **Author's note:** This is only a partial quotation of the tradition *[ḥadīth]*, which continues beyond this point.

It is recommended that her grave should be veiled, as opposed to that of a man, because she is subject to concealment [*'aura*]. 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once passed by a group of people, just when they had spread a cloth over [the grave of] of man, so he pulled it away and said: "This treatment is appropriate only for women."

As soon as the corpse has been laid to rest in the grave, facing toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca], three handfuls of dust should be scattered over it. That is in accordance with the Sunna [the exemplary practice of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)]. Then the earth should be heaped on top of the corpse.

The grave should be raised above the ground to the extent of one span [*shibr*].[397] Water should be sprinkled over it, and pebbles should be placed upon it. If it is coated with clay, this is permissible, but the application of whitewash is subject to disapproval.

It is customary to give a humped shape to the surface of the grave, rather than to make it flat, because al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"I noticed that the grave of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was humped in shape, as were those of his Companions."

When the person in charge has finished the interment [*taqbīr*] of the corpse, it is customary for him to address the deceased, prompting him to respond. This practice is based on the traditional report of Abū Umāma (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who stated that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When one of you has died, and you have spread the dust upon him, one of you should stand at the head of his grave, and then say: "O So-and-so, son of the lady So-and-so!" For he will hear, although he will not answer. Then the prompter should say a second time: "O So-and-so, son of the lady So-and-so!" For he will then sit up straight. Then the prompter should say again: "O So-and-so, son of the lady So-and-so!" For then he will say, although you will not hear him: "Guide us aright! May Allāh bestow His mercy upon you!"
>
> So then the prompter should say: "Remember that with which you left the abode of this world, namely, the testimony [*shahāda*] that there is no god but Allāh [*an lā ilāha illa 'llāh*], and that Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger [*wa anna Muḥammadan 'abdu-hu wa Rasūlu-hu*]. Remember that you are well pleased with Allāh as a Lord [*Rabban*], and with Islām as a religion [*dīnan*], and with Muḥammad as a Prophet [*Nabiyyan*], and with the Qur'ān as a leader [*imāman*]." For [the interrogating angels] Munkar and Nakīr[398] will then say: "We shall not sit beside this one, for he has already stated his case."

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[397] See note 395 on p. 299 above.

"O Messenger of Allāh," a man asked, "what if the prompter does not know the name of the mother of the deceased?" So he told him: "In that case, he may simply address him as the son of Eve [*Ḥauwāʾ*]."

If he wishes to do so, it is quite permissible for the prompter to add: "And [that you are well content] with the believers [*muʾminīn*] as brothers [*ikhwānan*], and with the Kaʿba as a direction in which to turn in prayer [*qiblatan*]," and other such distinctive features of Islām.

* * * * * * *

This brings us to the end of the Chapter in which we have provided a concise treatment of certain special ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*], namely:

1. The ritual prayer of the Friday congregation [*salāt al-jumʿa*].
2. The ritual prayer of each of the Two Festivals [*ṣalāt al-ʿĪdain*].
3. The ritual prayer for relief from drought [*salāt al-istisqāʾ*].
4. The ritual prayer at the eclipse of the sun [*ṣalāt al-kusūf*] and at the eclipse of the moon [*ṣalāt al-khusūf*].
5. The ritual prayer in time of danger [*ṣalāt al-khauf*].
6. The shortened version of the ritual prayer [*qaṣr aṣ-ṣalāt*].
7. The combination of two ritual prayers [*al-jamʿ baina ʾṣ-ṣalātain*].
8. The ritual prayer at the funeral service [*as-salāt ʿala ʾl-jināza*].

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi ʾl-ʿālamīn*].

CHAPTER TEN

Concerning the special qualities of the [voluntary] ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* performed in the daytime on each of the days of the week.[398]

1.

Traditional reports concerning [voluntary] ritual prayers performed during the daytime *[ṣalawāt an-nahār]*.

As for what has come down to us on the subject of the daytime ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt an-nahār]*, one item is the traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Abū Salama, according to which Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to me:

> "'Whenever you are about to go out of your place of residence, you should perform two cycles of ritual prayer *[fa-ṣalli rak'atain]*, for they will prevent you from making a bad exit, and whenever you enter your place of residence, you should likewise perform two cycles of ritual prayer, for they will prevent you from making a bad entrance.'"

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said, with reference to the prayer of daybreak *[ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ]*:

> Whenever someone performs the ritual ablution *[tawaḍḍa']*, then sets out for the mosque *[masjid]*, and then performs the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* inside it, for every

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[398] While some of the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* discussed in this Chapter are obligatory in themselves, the emphasis here is on their performance in congregation *[jamā'a]*, which, while strongly recommended, is not strictly compulsory.

> step he takes, he will be credited with a good deed, and a bad deed will be erased from his record. Moreover, the good deed will carry the value of ten of its kind. If he performs the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, then takes his leave [from the mosque] at the rising of the sun, Allāh (Exalted is He) will record a good deed in his favor for every hair on his body, and he will return home with an accepted Pilgrimage *[Ḥijja mabrūra]*[399] to his credit.
>
> If he sits until he is ready to perform a cycle of prayer *[hattā yarkaʿa]*, for every act of sitting *[jalsa]* Allāh (Exalted is He) will record a million good deeds in his credit column.
>
> Whenever someone performs the late evening prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿatama]*,[illegible] he is entitled to receive a similar reward, and he will return home with an accepted Visitation *[ʿUmra mabrūra]*[400] to his credit.

[The Caliph] ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "I once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> "'When someone performs the late evening prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ]* in a congregation *[jamāʿa]*, it is as if he has devoted half the night to worship. And when someone performs the dawn prayer *[ṣalāt al-fajr]* in a congregation *[jamāʿa]*, it is as if he has spent the entire night in prayer.'"[illegible]

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Abū Ṣāliḥ, Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> No ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* is more burdensome for the hypocrites *[munāfiqīn]* than the prayer of late evening and that of the dawn *[ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ wa'l-fajr]*. If they did but know what [blessings] these two contain, they would surely come to perform them, even if they had to come crawling on their hands and knees! I once considered the idea of ordering my servants to gather firewood, so I could make it too hot for men who do not attend [the congregation] with us to stay in their houses!

According to ʿAṭāʾ ibn Yasār, Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs four cycles of ritual prayer *[ṣallā arbaʿa rakaʿāt]* after the sun has declined from the meridian, paying proper attention to their Qurʾānic recitation *[qirāʾa]* and to their acts of bowing *[rukūʿ]* and prostration *[sujūd]*, seventy thousand angels will pray together with him, begging forgiveness on his behalf until the night sets in.

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[399] The term *Ḥijja* is applied to a specific performance of the *Ḥajj* [Pilgrimage]. For a full account of the rites of *Ḥajj* [Pilgrimage] and *ʿUmra* [Visitation, Lesser Pilgrimage], see Vol. 1, pp. 26–52.

[400] See Vol. 1, pp. 44 and 47.

According to this same report, Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) went on to say:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would never fail to perform four [voluntary cycles of prayer] after the sun's decline from the meridian. He would prolong them, and he used to say:

> "'The gates of heaven are opened at this hour, so I would like to have a good deed of mine rise up into it.'

"Someone asked: 'O Messenger of Allāh, is there a [ritual salutation of] "Peace!" in them, marking a division [of the four cycles into two segments]?' 'No,' said he (Allāh bless him and give him peace)."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is also reported as having said:

> May Allāh bestow His mercy upon any servant [of His] who performs four [voluntary cycles of prayer] before [the obligatory ritual prayer of] the afternoon *[al-'aṣr]*.

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He has also said (Exalted is He):

And We appointed them to be leaders	*wa jaʿalnā-hum aʾimmatan*
guiding by Our command,	*yahdūna bi-amri-nā*
and We revealed to them	*wa awḥainā ilai-him*
the doing of good deeds,	*fiʿla ʾl-khairāti*
and the performance of the prayer,	*wa iqāma ʾṣ-ṣalāti*
and the payment of the alms-due,	*wa ītāʾa ʾz-zakāh*
and Us they served. (21:73)	*wa kānū la-nā ʿābidīn.*

Here he has mentioned all good deeds in general, they being all acts of worshipful obedience *[ṭāʿāt]*, together with the avoidance of all acts of sinful disobedience *[maʿāṣī]*. Then He has singled out the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* for special mention, and enjoined it upon them in particular.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) bequeathed the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* to his Community, at the point of his departure from this world, for he said:

> Allāh, Allāh, Allāh! In [your dutiful performance of] the ritual prayer, and in [your treatment of] what your right hands possess *[fi ʾṣ-ṣalāti wa fī-mā malakat aimānu-kum]*.[226]

This was his final bequest (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and indeed, we are told in the tradition *[ḥadīth]* that this was the last bequest of every Prophet *[Nabī]* to his Community *[Umma]*, and his final testament to them at the point of his departure from this world.

The ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* was thus the first obligatory religious duty *[farīḍa]* to be made incumbent upon the Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and upon his Community *[Umma]*, and the dutiful performance thereof was the last injunction bequeathed by him to his Community. It will be the final element to be taken away from Islām, and the first item about which the servant [of the Lord] will be questioned on the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*, when he is called to account for his religious practice. It is the supporting pillar *[ʿamūd]* of Islām, and once it has gone, there will no longer be either any such thing as religion *[dīn]* or any such thing as Islām. According to the tradition *[ḥadīth]*, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The first element of your religion *[dīn]* that you lose will be fidelity *[amāna]*, and the last element of it that you lose will be the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*. The time will come when only good-for-nothing types will still be performing the ritual prayer *[la-yuṣalliyanna aqwāmun lā khalāqa la-hum]*.

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[226] The Qurʾānic expression "what your right hands possess *[mā malakat aimānu-kum]*" means "your slaves."

3.
Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on a Monday *[ṣalāt yauwm al-ithnain]*.

According to a traditional report transmitted by Abu 'z-Zubair, on the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdi 'llāh [al-Anṣārī] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[rak'atain]* at daybreak on a Monday—reciting the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* once in each cycle, the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[401] one time, "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']"[402] one time, and the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge *[al-Mu'awwidhatain]*[403] one time each—and if, when he pronounces the salutation *[idhā sallama]*, he appeals ten times to Allāh for forgiveness, and invokes His blessing upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) ten times—Allāh will forgive him all his sins.

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted by Thābit al-Bunānī, on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[ṣallā ithnatai 'ashrata rak'a]* on a Monday, reciting the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* in each cycle, and the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]* one time—and if, when he has concluded his performance of the prayer *[ṣalāt]*, he recites "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" twelve times, and seeks forgiveness twelve times—an angelic voice will call for him on the Day of Resurrection *[Yauwm al-Qiyāma]*, saying: "Where is So-and-so, the son of So-and-so? Let him step forward to receive his reward from Allāh (Exalted is He)!" He will then be given, as the first part of his reward, a thousand fine articles of clothing. A crown will be placed upon his head, and he will be told: "Enter the Garden of Paradise!" A thousand angels will bid him welcome, each angel bearing a gift, and they will escort him on a tour of a thousand palaces constructed from glittering light.

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[401] Q. 2:255.

[402] Sūra 112.

[403] Sūra 113 and Sūra 114.

4.

Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on a Tuesday *[ṣalāt yawm ath-thalāthā']*.

According to a traditional report transmitted by Yazīd ar-Raqāshī, on the authority of Mālik ibn Anas (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs ten [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[raka'āt]* on a Tuesday, in the middle of the day—reciting the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* once in each cycle, the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[404] one time, and "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']"[405] three times—no sinful error will be recorded in his debit column for seventy days. Then, if he dies before the seventy days are up, he will die as a martyr *[shahīd]*, and he will be forgiven the sins of seventy years.

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[404] Q. 2:255

[405] Sūra 112.

5.

Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on a Wednesday [*ṣalāt yawm al-arbaʿāʾ*].

According to a traditional report transmitted by Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī, on the authority of Muʿādh ibn Jabal (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*ithnatai ʿashrata rakʿa*] on a Wednesday, at the high point of the day—reciting the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātihat al-Kitāb*] in each cycle, the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*][406] one time, "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']"[407] three times, and the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge [*al-Muʿawwidhatain*][408] three times—an angel will call out to him from beside the Heavenly Throne [*ʿArsh*]: "O servant of Allāh, you may now set to work with a clean slate, for all your previous sins have been forgiven!" Allāh will exempt him from the torment of the tomb, and from its narrowness and gloom. He will also exempt him from the terrible hardships of the Resurrection, and He will accept his day's work with the honor conferred on the work of a Prophet [*Nabī*].

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[406] Q. 2:255.

[407] Sūra 112.

[408] Sūras 113 and 114.

6.
Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on a Thursday *[ṣalāt yawm al-khamīs]*.

According to a traditional report transmitted by ʿIkrima, on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[rakʿatain]* on a Thursday, at some point between the [obligatory prayers of] noon *[aẓ-ẓuhr]* and afternoon *[al-ʿaṣr]*—reciting in the first cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* one time, and the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[409] one hundred times, and in the second cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* [one time], and "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']"[410] one hundred times—and if, when he has finished [performing the ritual prayer], he invokes Allāh's blessing upon me one hundred times—Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant him the spiritual reward of someone who fasts in the months of Rajab, Shaʿbān and Ramaḍān. The amount of his spiritual reward will be comparable to that of a Pilgrim of the House [of Allāh] *[Ḥājj al-Bait]*. As for the good deeds to be recorded in his credit column, their number will be equal to the total figure arrived at by adding up all the people who believe in Allāh (Exalted is He) and put their trust in Him.

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[409] Q. 2:255.

[410] Sūra 112.

Concerning the merit of fasting *[ṣiyām]* in general.

On this subject, as we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Nasr,[a] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone devotes a single day to fasting, for the purpose of gaining the countenance of Allāh (Exalted is He), Allāh will keep him at a distance from Hell—at the distance covered by a raven *[ghurāb]* that takes flight when it is merely a chick, and then stays airborne till it dies of old age.

It is said that the raven *[ghurāb]* has a normal lifespan of fifty years!

According to a report from Abu'd-Dardā' (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> If someone devotes a single day to fasting, for the sake of Allāh's cause *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*, Allāh will install a trench *[khandaq]* between him and the Fire of Hell, and the width thereof will be as great as the distance between the heaven and the earth.

According to a another traditional report, this one from Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone devotes a single day to fasting, for the sake of Allāh's cause *[fī sabīli 'llāh]*, Allāh will reward him for it by keeping his face at a distance from the Fire of Hell, for seventy autumn seasons.

'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: "I once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> "'Whenever a servant [of the Lord] embarks upon the morning in a state of fasting, the gates of heaven are opened up for him, the members of his body glorify the Lord, and the inhabitants of the heaven of this lower world *[ahl samā' ad-dunyā]* seek forgiveness on his behalf, until the world disappears behind the veil [of night]. If that servant also performs one or two cycles of ritual prayer

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[a] **Author's note**. Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from **'Amr ibn Rabī'a—Salām ibn Qais** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

> practicing the remembrance of Allāh (Exalted is He), until the sun has risen into view, he will be entitled to seventy degrees in Paradise *[Firdaus]*. Moreover, in the space between two degrees, he will have trained horses at his disposal for seventy years.
>
> If someone performs the Friday [Congregational] prayer *[ṣalla 'l-jum'a]*, as a member of a congregation *[jamā'a]*, he will be entitled to fifty degrees in Paradise *[Firdaus]*, and he will have thoroughbred horses at his disposal for fifty years.
>
> If someone performs the [obligatory] afternoon prayer *[ṣalla 'l-'aṣr]* on a Friday, as a member of a congregation *[jamā'a]*, it will be to his credit as if he had emancipated eighty of the offspring of Ishmael *[Ismā'īl]*, delivering each of them from slavery.
>
> If someone performs the [obligatory] sunset prayer *[ṣalla 'l-maghrib]* on a Friday, as a member of a congregation *[jamā'a]*, it will be to his credit as if he had performed a Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* blessed with acceptance and a Visitation *['Umra]* worthy of approval.

According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Mujāhid, Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[rak'atain]* on a Friday, at some point between the [obligatory prayers of] noon *[aẓ-ẓuhr]* and afternoon *[al-'aṣr]*—reciting in the first cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* one time, the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[413] one time, and "*Qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'l-Falaq* [Say: I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak']"[414] twenty-five times; and reciting in the second cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* one time, "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One']"[415] one time, and "*Qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'l-Falaq* [Say: I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak']" twenty times—and if, when he has pronounced the salutation *[sallama]*, he says, fifty times:

There is no power,	*lā ḥawla*
nor is there any strength,	*wa lā quwwata*
except through Allāh,	*illā bi'llāhi 'l-*
the All-High, the Almighty!	*'Aliyyi 'l-'Aẓīm!*

> —he will not depart from this world until he has seen his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) in a dream, and has seen his situation in the Garden of Paradise, or had it shown to him.

It is related that an Arab of the desert *[A'rābī]* once came to town to visit the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). "O Messenger

[413] Q. 2:255.

[414] Sūra 113.

[415] Sūra 112.

of Allāh," he said, "we are out in the desert, far from the city, and we cannot come to join you every Friday. So advise me of some practice that can appropriately be observed on the Day of Congregation, and I shall tell my people about it when I return to them." To this Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded by saying:

> O Arab of the desert, when Friday [the Day of Congregation] comes around, perform two cycles of ritual prayer *[ṣalli rak'atain]* when the day is near its height. In the first cycle, recite the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* and "*Qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'l-Falaq* [Say: I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak']. In the second cycle, recite the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* and "*Qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'n-Nās* [Say: I take refuge with the Lord of Mankind']."[416] Then pronounce the testimony and the salutation *[tashahhad wa sallim]*, and recite the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[417] seven times, remaining in a sitting posture while you do so.
>
> Then perform eight cycles of ritual prayer *[raka'āt]*, as two sets of four. In the each cycle, recite the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* and "*Idhā jā'a naṣru 'llāhi wa 'l-fatḥ*... [When the help of Allāh comes, and victory ...']"[418] one time, and "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']"[419] twenty-five times. Then, when you have finished performing your prayer *[ṣalāt]*, say, seventy times:

There is no power,	***lā ḥawla***
nor is there any strength,	***wa lā quwwata***
except through Allāh,	***illā bi'llāhi 'l-***
the All-High, the Almighty!	***'Aliyyi 'l-'Aẓīm!***

> By the One who holds the soul of Muhammad in His hand, no truly believing man *[mu'min]*, and no truly believing woman *[mu'mina]*, will perform this particular ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]* on a Friday, exactly as I have just described it, without my being his [or her] guarantor of the Garden of Paradise. Nor will any such person leave his place [of prayer] until Allāh has granted forgiveness to him and to his parents, if they are Muslims. And an angelic herald will cry out from beneath the Heavenly Throne *['Arsh]*: "O servant of Allāh, you may now set to work with a clean slate, for all your previous and more recent sins have been forgiven!"

Many more special qualities have been attributed to it [i.e., to voluntary ritual prayer performed on a Friday], but it would take too long to mention them all here. As we have in fact mentioned previously, in connection with other special qualities, there is another [voluntary] ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, appropriately performed on a Friday, in which "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" is recited eighteen times. So, if anyone wishes to perform such a prayer, let him perform it!

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[416] Sūra 114.

[417] Q. 2:255.

[418] That is to say, the Sūra of [Divine] Help *[Sūrat an-Naṣr]* (Q. 110).

[419] Sūra 112.

8.

Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on a Saturday *[ṣalāt yaum as-sabt]*.

According to a traditional report transmitted by Sa'īd, Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs four [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[raka'āt]* on a Saturday—reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātihat al-Kitāb]* one time, and "*Qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn*... [Say 'O unbelievers...']"[420] three times—and if, when he has finished performing his ritual prayer *[salāt]* and has pronounced the salutation *[sallama]*, he recites the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[421]—for every letter [in the words of his Qur'ānic recitation] Allāh (Exalted is He) will record a Pilgrimage *[Hajj]* and a Visitation *['Umra]* in his credit column. For every letter, He will confer upon him the merit of a whole year devoted to fasting by day and keeping vigil by night. For every letter *[harf]*,[422] Allāh will grant him the spiritual reward of a martyr *[shahīd]*, and [in the Hereafter] he will be in the company of the Prophets *[Anbiyā']* and the martyrs *[shuhadā']* beneath the Heavenly Throne *['Arsh]*.

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This brings us to the end of the Chapter concerning the special qualities of the [voluntary] ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* performed in the daytime on each of the days of the week.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn].

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[420] Sūra 109.

[421] Q. 2:255.

[422] The basic meaning of the term *harf* (of which *hurūf* and *ahruf* are plural forms) is "a letter of the Arabic alphabet." In some contexts, however, it may also signify "a connected group of Arabic letters, representing either a separate word, or, in some cases, a grammatical combination of two or more elements, only one of which can normally be written separately."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Concerning the special qualities of [voluntary] ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* performed in the nighttime on each of the days of the week.[423]

1.

Concerning the special quality of [voluntary] ritual prayer performed during the night of Sunday *[ṣalāt lailat al-aḥad]*.[424]

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "I once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> "'If someone performs twenty [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[ʿishrīn rakʿa]* on a Sunday night—reciting in each cycle "*Al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*… [Praise be to Allāh…]"[425] one time, "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One']"[426] fifty times, and the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge *[al-Muʿawwidhatain]*[427] three times—and if he begs forgiveness of Allāh (Glory be to Him) one hundred times, and begs forgiveness of Allāh for himself and his parents one hundred times, and invokes Allāh's blessing on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) one hundred times, and renounces all personal claim to power and strength *[tabarraʾa min al-ḥawli wa'l-quwwa]*, and takes refuge in the power and strength of Allāh[428]—and if he then says:

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[423] While some of the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* discussed in this Chapter are obligatory in themselves, the emphasis here is on their performance in congregation *[jamāʿa]*, which, while strongly recommended, is not strictly compulsory.

[424] It is important to remember that the Islāmic day (in the sense of a 24-hour period) begins at sunset. This means that the night of Sunday *[lailat al-aḥad]* begins when the sun sets on Saturday

[425] Sūra 1.

[426] Sūra 112.

[427] Sūras 113 and 114.

[428] In other words, if he declares:

There is no power,	*lā ḥaula*
nor is there any strength,	*wa lā quwwata*
except through Allāh,	*illā*
the All-High, the Almighty!	*bi'llāhi 'l-ʿAliyyi 'l-ʿAẓīm.*

According to Ibrāhīm an-Nakhaʿī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "The 'numbered days *[al-ayyām al-maʿdūdāt]*' are the Ten Days [of Dhu'l-Ḥijja], while the 'days appointed *[al-ayyām al-maʿlūmāt]*' are the Days of Immolation *[Ayyām an-Naḥr]*."

As for the context in which Allāh (Exalted is He) commanded the Muslims to practice remembrance *[dhikr]*, in this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* (2:203) and the one preceding it, in which He said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And when you have performed	*fa-idhā qaḍaitum manāsika-kum*
your holy rites, remember Allāh,	*fa-'dhkurū 'llāha*
as you remember your fathers	*ka-dhikri-kum*
or with a more intense remembrance.	*ābāʾa-kum aw ashadda dhikrā.*
(2:200)	

—the traditional commentators *[mufassirūn]* have provided the following background information: When the [pre-Islāmic] Arabs had completed their Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, they used to stand by the House *[Bait]* and remember the exploits of their fathers and their glorious deeds. A man might say: "My father would always receive his guest with warm hospitality. He would always provide good food. He would sacrifice a camel fit for slaughter, and shear the forelocks [of other animals]. He would do such-and-such, and such-and-such." They used to compete with one another in making such boastful claims, so Allāh (Exalted is He) commanded His remembrance. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) sent down the revelation:

And when you have performed	*fa-idhā qaḍaitum manāsika-kum*
your holy rites, remember Allāh,	*fa-'dhkurū 'llāha*
as you remember your fathers	*ka-dhikri-kum*
or with a more intense remembrance.	*ābāʾa-kum aw ashadda dhikrā.*
(2:200)	

—and so on, through to His words (Exalted is He):

And remember Allāh	*wa 'dhkurū 'llāha*
during certain numbered days.	*fī ayyāmin maʿdūdāt*
(2:203)	

He also said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

"So remember Me (2:152)	*fa-'dhkurū-nī*

—for I am the One who made that possible for your fathers, and for you. I am the One who treated them and you so well."

2.

Concerning the special quality of [voluntary] ritual prayer performed during the night of Monday *[ṣalāt lailat al-ithnain]*.[429]

According to a traditional report, transmitted on the authority of al-A'mash, Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs four [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[raka'āt]* on a Monday night—reciting in the first cycle "*Al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*… [Praise be to Allāh…]"[430] one time, and "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']"[431] ten times, and in the second cycle "*Al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*… [Praise be to Allāh…]" one time, and "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" twenty times, and in the third cycle "*Al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*… [Praise be to Allāh…]" one time, and "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" thirty times, and in the fourth cycle "*Al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*… [Praise be to Allāh…]" one time, and "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" forty times—and if he then pronounces the testimony and the salutation *[tashahhada wa sallama]*, and recites "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" seventy-five times, and begs forgiveness of Allāh for himself and his parents seventy-five times, and invokes Allāh's blessing on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) seventy-five times, and then asks [in his supplication] for his need to be satisfied—it will be an obligation *[ḥaqq]* incumbent upon Allāh (Exalted is He) to satisfy his need.

This is actually called the Ritual Prayer of Need *[ṣalāt al-ḥāja]*.

According to another traditional report, this transmitted on the authority of Abū Umāma (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[rak'atain]* on a Monday night—reciting in the each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* one time, and "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" fifteen times—and if he recites the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[432] fifteen

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[429] The night of Monday *[lailat al-ithnain]* begins when the sun sets on Sunday.

[430] Sūra 1.

[431] Sūra 112.

[432] Q. 2:255.

times after the salutation [*taslīm*], and begs forgiveness of Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) fifteen times—Allāh (Exalted is He) will include his name among the names of those who belong to the Garden of Paradise, even if he is one of those who [would otherwise] belong to the Fire of Hell, and He will forgive him his sins of flagrant wrongdoing. For every Qur'ānic verse [*āya*] he recites, He will credit him with a Pilgrimage [*Ḥajj*] and a Visitation [*'Umra*], and if he dies between that Monday and the next Monday, he will die as a martyr [*shahīd*].

For instance, 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said that [her husband] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to perform the two voluntary cycles after the sunset prayer *[ba'da 'l-maghrib]* in his own apartment. A similar report has come down to us from Umm Ḥabība[200] (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would never perform the two voluntary cycles after the sunset prayer *[ba'da 'l-maghrib]*, except in his own apartment."

Let us give the last word on this subject to Sahl ibn Sa'd as-Sā'idī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who is reported as having said:

"By the time I had attained to manhood, I found myself living in the age of [the Caliph] 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), and I noticed that, as soon as the obligatory sunset prayer had ended with the salutation *[taslīma]*,[201] there would not be one single member of the congregation performing the two—meaning the two voluntary cycles after the sunset prayer *[ar-rak'atain ba'da 'l-maghrib]*—in the mosque *[masjid]*. They would all be jostling toward the door of the mosque, departing in haste to perform the customary prayer in their own homes."

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[200] Like 'Ā'isha, Umm Ḥabība (may Allāh be well pleased with them both) is revered as one of the "Mothers of the Believers *[Ummahāt al-Mu'minīn]*," the wives of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[201] See note 196 on p. 141 above.

4.

Concerning the special quality of [voluntary] ritual prayer performed during the night of Wednesday *[ṣalāt lailat al-arba'ā']*.[415]

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[rak'atain]* on a Wednesday night—reciting in the first cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātihat al-Kitāb]* one time, and "*Qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'l-Falaq* [Say: I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak]"[416] ten times, and in the second cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātihat al-Kitāb]* one time, and "*Qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'n-Nās* [Say: I take refuge with the Lord of Mankind]"[417] ten times—seventy thousand angels will come down from every heaven, recording the reward in his credit column until the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*.

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[415] The night of Wednesday *[lailat al-arba'ā']* begins when the sun sets on Tuesday.

[416] Sūra 113.

[417] Sūra 114.

5.

Concerning the special quality of [voluntary] ritual prayer performed during the night of Thursday *[ṣalāt lailat al-khamīs]*.[438]

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Abū Ṣāliḥ, Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[rak'atain]* on a Thursday night, at some point between the [obligatory prayers of] sunset *[al-maghrib]* and late evening *[al-'ishā']*—reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* one time, "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" five times, and the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge *[al-Mu'awwidhatain]*[439] five times—and if, when he has finished performing his ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, he begs forgiveness of Allāh (Exalted is He) fifteen times, and donates the spiritual reward for it [his prayer] to his parents—he will have discharged his obligation to them both, even if he has been undutiful *['āqq]* in his treatment of them,[440] and Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) will grant him the gracious favor that He bestows upon the champions of truth *[ṣiddīqīn]* and the martyrs *[shuhadā']*.[441]

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[438] The night of Thursday *[lailat al-khamīs]* begins when the sun sets on Wednesday.

[439] Sūras 113 and 114.

[440] As Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in Vol. 2, p. 110:

> The undutiful treatment of one's parents *['uqūq al-wālidain]* may mean any or all of the following: failing to respect their solemn warnings, striking them when they speak to you reproachfully, refusing to give them something when they ask you for it, or refusing to feed them when they are hungry and begging you to feed them.

Nevertheless, as the Shaikh (may Allāh be well pleased with him) also points out in Vol. 1, p. 97:

> Obedience to parents cannot go so far as to include the abandonment of obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]*, such as the testimony of Islām *[kalimat al-islām]*, the five ritual prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams]*, payment of the alms-due *[zakāt]*, an act of atonement *[kaffāra]* or the fulfillment of a solemn vow *[nadhr]*

[441] This is an allusion to Q. 4:69.

6.

Concerning the special quality of [voluntary] ritual prayer performed during the night of Friday *[ṣalāt lailat al-jumʿa]*.[442]

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Jābir ibn ʿAbdi 'llāh [al-Anṣārī] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[ithnatai ʿasharata rakʿa]* on a Friday night, at some point between the [obligatory prayers of] sunset *[al-maghrib]* and late evening *[al-ʿishāʾ]*—reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]*, and "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" ten times—it will be as if he had devoted himself to the worshipful service of Allāh (Exalted is He) for twelve whole years, by fasting every day and keeping vigil every night throughout that time.

According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Kathīr ibn Salama, Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If, on a Friday night, someone performs the [obligatory] late evening ritual prayer *[ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ al-ākhira]* in a congregation *[jamāʿa]*, and follows it with the performance of the two cycles of customary prayer *[rakʿatai 's-sunna]*, then goes on to perform ten cycles [of additional, voluntary] prayer—reciting in each cycle "*Al-ḥamdu li'llāhi* ... [Praise be to Allāh ...]"[443] one time, "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']"[444] one time, and the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge *[al-Muʿawwidhatain]*[445] one time each—and if he then performs a *witr*[446] prayer of three cycles, and sleeps on his right side, with his face turned toward the *Qibla* [the direction of the Kaʿba in Mecca]—it will be as if he had kept vigil throughout the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*.

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[442] The night of Friday *[lailat al-jumʿa]* begins when the sun sets on Thursday

[443] Sūra 1.

[444] Sūra 112.

[445] Sūras 113 and 114.

[446] See note 50 on p. 42 above.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> Invoke Allāh's blessing upon me, many times over, in the course of the illustrious night *[al-lailat al-gharrā']*, and during the brightly shining day *[al-yaum al-azhar]*—on the night of Friday, the Day of Congregational Prayer *[Lailat al-Jum'a]*, and then on the Day itself.

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4.

Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on a Tuesday *[ṣalāt yawm ath-thalāthā']*.

According to a traditional report transmitted by Yazīd ar-Raqāshī, on the authority of Mālik ibn Anas (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs ten [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[raka'āt]* on a Tuesday, in the middle of the day—reciting the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* once in each cycle, the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[404] one time, and "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']"[405] three times—no sinful error will be recorded in his debit column for seventy days. Then, if he dies before the seventy days are up, he will die as a martyr *[shahīd]*, and he will be forgiven the sins of seventy years.

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[404] Q. 2:255

[405] Sūra 112.

A reminder concerning the importance of fulfilling one's obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]* before engaging in the performance of supererogatory devotions *[nawāfil]*; and before performing supererogatory devotions *[nawāfil]* with the intention of making up for previous omissions in the performance of obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]*.

We have already discussed this topic in the Discourse on Repentance *[Majlis at-Tauba]*,[448] as well as elsewhere in the course of this book, but the following points deserve to be reiterated here:

The worshipper's first priority must be the complete and proper performance of all obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]* and customary observances *[sunan]*. After these have been discharged, and only then, he may engage in supererogatory devotions *[nawāfil]*, whether these be connected with ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, fasting *[ṣiyām]*, charitable donation *[ṣadaqa]*, or any of the various forms of worshipful service *['ibādāt]*.

In all his acts of worshipful service *['ibādāt]*, of whatever type they may be, his conscious intention should be to fulfill the strict obligations *[farā'iḍ]* that are incumbent upon him. Thus, with respect to all these [voluntary] ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]* we have mentioned, as being appropriate to the various nights and days of the week, the worshipper should perform them with the intention of making up *[qaḍā']* for previous omissions. He will thereby acquit himself of outstanding duty *[farḍ]*, and he will also obtain additional merit *[faḍl]*. Allāh (Exalted is He) will combine the two, through His grace, His mercy, and His noble generosity.

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[448] Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is referring to the Third Discourse of the present work. (See Vol. 2, pp. 105–208.)

Finally, once he has really and truly acquitted himself of strictly obligatory duties *[farā'iḍ]*, the worshipper may legitimately intend *[yanwī]* his performance of all that [additional worship] to be a purely supererogatory devotion *[nāfila]*.

• • • • • • •

This brings us to the end of the Chapter concerning
the special qualities of the [voluntary] ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*
performed in the nighttime on each of the days of the week.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn].

CHAPTER TWELVE

Concerning certain special ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*], namely:

1. The ritual prayer of glorification [*ṣalāt at-tasbīḥ*].
2. The ritual prayer for guidance in choosing the best option [*ṣalāt al-istikhāra*].
3. The ritual prayer for sufficient protection [*ṣalāt al-kifāya*].
4. The ritual prayer for one's adversaries in litigation [*ṣalāt al-khuṣamā'*].
5. The ritual prayer of those who are emancipated [from the Fire of Hell] in the month of Shawwāl [*ṣalāt al-'utaqā' fī Shawwāl*].
6. The ritual prayer for the removal of the torment of the tomb [*aṣ-ṣalāt li-raf' 'adhāb al-qabr*].
7. The ritual prayer for help in time of need [*ṣalāt al-ḥāja*].

1.

Concerning the special merit of the ritual prayer of glorification *[ṣalāt at-tasbīḥ]*.[449]

As for the special quality of the ritual prayer of glorification *[ṣalāt at-tasbīḥ]*, we learn from a traditional report, transmitted [by a chain of reliable authorities][450] from Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to al-'Abbās ibn 'Abdi'l-Muṭṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> O 'Abbās, my dear uncle! I really must give you a gift! I really must make you a present! I really must do you a favor! I really must let you know about ten special practices *[khiṣāl]*, for, if you carry them out, Allāh will forgive you your sin, the first and the last of it, the old and the new, the unintentional and the deliberate, the small and the great, the private and the public.
>
> You must perform four cycles of ritual prayer *[raka'āt]*, reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* and one other Sūra.
>
> When you have finished the Qur'ānic recitation in the first cycle *[rak'a]*, and while you are still standing erect, you must say—fifteen times:

Glory be to Allāh,	***subḥāna 'llāhi***
and praise be to Allāh,	***wa 'l-ḥamdu li'llāhi***
and there is no god but Allāh,	*wa lā ilāha illa 'llāhu*
and Allāh is Supremely Great!	***wa 'llāhu Akbar*.**

> Then you must perform the act of bowing, pronouncing it [the same affirmation] ten times while you are in the posture of bowing *[rukū']*

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[449] The verbal noun *tasbīḥ* is derived from the three-consonant root *s-b-ḥ*, which occurs in the expression "***subḥāna 'llāh* [Glory be to Allāh]!**"

[450] **Author's note:** This report was conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā', on the authority of his father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā', who cited the following chain of transmission *[isnād]*: **Abu'l-Fath Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Abi'l-Fawāris and Abū Muhammad al-Hasan ibn Muhammad al-Khallāl** [the Vinegar Merchant]—**Abū Hafs 'Umar ibn Ahmad al-Wā'iẓ** [the Preacher]—**'Abdu'llāh ibn Muhammad al-Baghawī—Ishāq ibn Abī Isrā'īl—Mūsā ibn 'Abdi'l-'Azīz—al-Hakam ibn Abbān—'Ikrima—Ibn 'Abbās** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father—**al-'Abbās ibn 'Abdi'l-Muttalib** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

> Then you must raise your head from the act of bowing *[rak'a]*,[451] and pronounce it ten times.
>
> Then you must perform the act of prostration, and pronounce it ten times.
>
> Then you must raise your head from the posture of prostration *[sujud]*, and pronounce it ten times.
>
> Then you must perform the [second] act of prostration, and pronounce it ten times.
>
> Then you must raise your head from the posture of prostration *[sujud]*, and pronounce it ten times.
>
> That all adds up to a total of seventy-five in each cycle *[rak'a]*. You must do the same in all four cycles *[raka'āt]*.
>
> If you are able to perform this special prayer once every day, then do so. If you cannot do it that often, then once every Friday [the Day of Congregation]. If you cannot do it that often, then once every month. If you cannot do it that often, then once every year. If you cannot do it that often, then at least once in your lifetime.

According to another version of this report, the Qur'ānic recitation should be:

> In the first cycle: the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* and "*Sabbiḥi 'sma Rabbi-ka 'l-A'lā*… [Glorify the Name of your Lord the Most High…]."[452]
>
> In the second cycle: the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* and "*Idhā zulzilat*… [When (the earth) is shaken…]."[453]
>
> In the third cycle: the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* and "*Qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn*… [Say: 'O you unbelievers…']."[454]
>
> In the fourth cycle: the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]* and "*Qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']"[455]

According to yet another traditional report,[456] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

> I really must make you a present! I really must do you a favor! I really must give you a gift!

(Our informant went on to quote the rest of the report *[ḥadīth]*.)

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[451] In this instance, the term rak'a is applied specifically to the act of bowing, rather than to the whole "cycle" of which it constitutes a major element. (See note 246 on p. 190 above.)

[452] Sūra 87.

[453] Sūra 99.

[454] Sūra 109.

[455] Sūra 112.

[456] **Author's note:** This report was conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā', on the authority of his father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā', complete with its chain of transmission *[isnād]*.

2.

Concerning the ritual prayer for guidance in choosing the best option *[ṣalāt al-istikhāra]*, and the prayer of supplication *[duʿāʾ]* appropriate to it.

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir, it was Jābir ibn ʿAbdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said:

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to teach us how to seek guidance in choosing the best option available in a practical enterprise *[al-istikhāra fi 'l-amr]*, just as he would sometimes teach us a Chapter *[Sūra]* from the Qurʾān:

> "'If one of you is concerned about some practical undertaking, or about making plans for a journey, he should perform two cycles of ritual prayer *[rakʿatain]*, not as an obligatory observance *[farīḍa]*, but voluntarily. Then he should say:

"'O Allāh, I ask You to show me	*Allāhumma innī*
what is best, through Your knowledge,	*astakhīru-ka bi-ʿilmi-ka*
and I ask You to empower me,	*wa astaqdiru-ka*
through Your power,	*bi-qudrati-ka*
and I beg You to grant me	*wa asʾalu-ka*
Your tremendous favor,	*min faḍli-ka 'l-ʿaẓīm:*
for You have power,	*fa-inna-ka taqdiru*
while I am without power,	*wa lā aqdiru*
and You have knowledge,	*wa taʿlamu*
while I am without knowledge,	*wa lā aʿlamu*
and You are the One who knows	*wa Anta*
all things invisible.	*ʿAllāmu 'l-ghuyūb:*

O Allāh, if You know that this	*Allāhumma in kunta taʿlamu*
undertaking[457] is in the best interests	*anna hādha 'l-amra khairun lī*
of my religion, my life in this world,	*fī dīnī wa dunyāya*
and my life in the Hereafter,	*wa ākhiratī*
and can yield successful results in both	*wa ʿāqibati amrī*
the short term and the long term,	*wa ʿājili-hi wa ājili-h*

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[457] An instruction is inserted at this point in the Arabic text, to the effect that the supplicant should state the exact nature of the proposed undertaking.

then make it possible for me	*fa-'qdir-hu lī*
and make it easy for me,	*wa yassir-hu lī*
and then bless me in it.	*thumma bārik lī fī-h:*
If not, then turn it away from me,	*wa illā fa-'ṣrif-hu 'an-nī*
and make it easy for me to do well,	*wa yassir liya 'l-khaira*
wherever I may happen to be, and	*haithu kāna mā kuntu*
make me content with Your verdict,	*wa raḍḍi-nī bi-qaḍā'i-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful.”	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn:*

* * *

2a.

Prayers of supplication *[ad'iya]* to be offered at the start of a journey and during the course of one's travels.[458]

As soon as someone has made a definite decision to embark on a journey away from home, whether it be a business expedition, a Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, or a visit, he should say, immediately after performing the two cycles of ritual prayer *[rak'atain]*:

O Allāh, I intend to set set out	*Allāhumma innī urīdu 'l-khurūja*
on this expedition of mine	*fī wajhī hādhā*
with no reliance on anyone	*bi-lā thiqatin min-nī*
other than You,	*bi-ghairi-k:*
and no expectation	*wa lā rajā'in*
of anyone but You.	*illā bi-k:*
In no power do I place my trust,	*wa lā quwwata atawakkalu 'alai-hā:*
and to no stratagem do I resort,	*wa lā ḥīlata alja'u ilai-hā*
apart from seeking	*illā ṭalabi*
Your gracious favor,	*faḍli-k:*
and applying for Your kindness	*wa 't-ta'arruḍi li-ma'rūfi-ka*
and Your mercy,	*wa raḥmati-k*
and relying on the value	*wa 's-sukūni ilā ḥusni*
of serving You well.	*'ibādati-k.*

You know best,	*wa Anta*
through Your foreknowledge,	*A'lamu bi-mā*
what has been predestined for me	*qad sabaqa lī fī 'ilmi-k:*
in this expedition of mine—	*fī wajhī hādhā*
both what I like and what I dislike.	*mim-mā uḥibbu wa akrah*

O Allāh, avert from me therefore,	*Allāhumma fa-'ṣrif 'an-nī*
through Your power,	*bi-qudrati-ka*
all possibilities of disaster,	*maqādira kulli balā'*
and dispel from me	*wa naffis 'an-nī*
all trouble and sickness,	*kulla karbin wa dā'*

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[458] In an earlier Chapter of the present work, where he has devoted a lengthy subsection to the good manners to be observed when traveling *[ādāb as-safar]*, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has also recommended certain traditional prayers of supplication *[ad'iya]*, which differ in some respects from those provided here. (See Vol. 1, pp. 85–90.)

and spread over me	*wa 'bsuṭ 'alayya*
a wing of Your mercy,	*kanafan min raḥmati-ka*
a gracious gift of Your help,	*wa luṭfan min 'awni-ka*
a shield of Your safekeeping,	*wa ḥirzan min ḥifẓi-ka*
and every form of Your protection.	*wa jamī'a mu'āfāti-k*

Then he should load up his luggage and start out on his journey, saying as he does so:

O my Lord, Your verdict on me	*yā Rabbi qaḍā'u-ka 'alayya*
is sure to be realized.	*ḥaqīqa:*
Let my expectation turn out well,	*aḥsin amalī*
and protect me	*wa 'dfa'*
from that of which I am wary,	*'an-nī mā aḥdharu*
of which You are More Aware	*mim-mā Anta A'lamu*
than I,	*bi-hi min-nī:*
and cause that to be good for me,	*wa 'j'al dhālika khairan lī*
for the sake of my religion	*fī dīnī*
and my life hereafter.	*wa ākhiratī:*

I beseech You, O my Lord,	*as'alu-ka yā Rabbi*
to deputize for me	*an takhlufa-nī*
by taking care	*fī mā khalaftu*
of those I have left behind—	*warā'ī*
my wife,	*min ahlī*
my children and my close relatives—	*wa waladī wa qarābatī*
with the best caretaking	*bi-aḥsani mā*
You ever performed	*khalafta bi-hi*
for any believer away from home,	*ghā'iban*
in order to ensure the chastity	*mina 'l-mu'minīna*
of every genital organ.	*fī taḥṣīni kulli 'awra:*
[I beg You] to provide protection	*wa ḥifẓan*
from every cause of harm,	*min kulli maḍarra:*
to satisfy every serious concern,	*wa kifāyata kulli muhimm.*
to ward off everything	*wa ṣarfa kulli*
that is repugnant,	*makrūh:*
and to grant me	*wa kamāla mā*
a perfect combination	*tajma'u lī bi-hi*
of all that contributes	*mina 'r-riḍā*
to my contentment	*wa 's-surūri*
and happiness in this world	*fi 'd-dunyā*
and the Hereafter.	*wa 'l-ākhira.*

Then grant that	*thumma 'rzuq-nī*
I may acknowledge all of that	*fī dhālika kulli-hi*
by showing gratitude to You,	*shukra-ka*
by remembering You,	*wa dhikra-ka*
and by serving You well,	*wa ḥusna 'ibādati-k:*
so that You will approve of me	*ḥattā tarḍā 'an-nī*
and cause me to enter	*wa tudkhila-nī*

Your Garden of Paradise,	*jannata-k:*
through Your mercy	*bi-rahmati-ka*
after that approval	*ba'da 'r-riḍā:*
O Most Merciful of the merciful.	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*

He should repeat the following prayer of supplication *[du'ā']* frequently in the course of his travels, for the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to utter it frequently:

Praise be to Allāh, who created me,	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi 'lladhī khalaqa-nī:*
though I was a thing	*wa lam aku shai'an*
of no importance.	*madhkūrā:*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
help me to face the terrors	*a'in-nī 'alā*
of this world,	*ahāwīli 'd-dunyā*
and the calamities of the ages,	*wa bawā'iqi 'd-duhūr:*
and the misfortunes	*wa maṣā'ibi 'l-*
of the nights and the days,	*layālī wa 'l-ayyām:*
and guard me from the wickedness	*wa 'kfi-nī sharra*
of what the tyrants do.	*mā ya'malu 'ẓ-ẓālimūn:*

O Allāh, accompany me therefore	*Allāhumma fī safarī*
in my journey, and deputize for me	*fa-'ṣḥab-nī*
in looking after my family,	*wa fī ahlī fa-'khluf-nī:*
and bless me	*wa fī-mā razaqta-nī*
in what You have provided for me,	*fa-bārik lī:*
and make me humble in myself,	*wa fī nafsī fa-dhallil-nī:*
and exalt me in the eyes	*wa fī a'yuni 'n-nāsi*
of other people,	*fa-'aẓẓim-nī:*
and reform me in my character	*wa fī khuluqī fa-qawwim-nī:*
and make me dear, O my Lord, to You.	*wa ilai-ka yā Rabbi fa-ḥabbib-nī:*

I take refuge	*a'ūdhu*
with Your Noble Countenance,	*bi-Wajhi-ka 'l-karīmi 'lladhī*
by which the heavens	*ashraqat*
have been made to shine,	*bi-hi 's-samāwāt:*
and the darknesses	*wa kushifat*
have been dispelled,	*bi-hi 'ẓ-ẓulumāt:*
and the welfare of the ancients	*wa ṣaluḥa 'alai-hi*
and the moderns has been assured,	*amru 'l-awwalīna wa 'l-ākhirīn:*
so that You will not cause Your anger	*an lā tuḥilla 'alayya*
to alight upon me,	*ghaḍaba-k:*
and so that You will not	*wa lā*
make me suffer	*tunzila bī*
Your displeasure.	*sukhta-k:*

To You belongs the credit	*la-ka 'l-'utbā*
for whatever I have been able to do,	*fī-mā 'staṭa't:*
and there is no power,	*wa lā ḥawla*

nor any strength,	*wa lā quwwata*
except through You.	*illā bi-k:*

O Allāh, I take refuge with You	*Allāhumma innī a'ūdhu bi-ka*
from hardship on the journey,	*min wa'thā'i 's-safar*
and from trouble on the way home,	*wa ka'ābati 'l-munqalab:*
and from depletion after plenty,	*wa mina 'l-ḥawri ba'da 'l-kawr*

and the claim of one	*wa da'wati 'l-*
who has been wronged.	*maẓlūm*

O Allāh, make the distance	*Allāhumma 'ṭwi*
seem short to us,	*la-na 'l-arḍa*
and make the journey	*wa hawwin*
a smooth one for us	*'alai-na 's-safar*
I beg You to convey	*as'alu-ka*
a communication	*balāghan*
that conveys a blessing from You,	*yuballighu khairan*
and forgiveness	*wa maghfiratan*
and a sign of approval.	*wa riḍwānā.*

I beg You to grant me	*as'alu-ka 'l-khaira*
all that is good,	*kulla-h:*
You are indeed Powerful	*inna-ka 'alā*
over all things.	*kulli shai'in Qadīr.*

At the moment of departure from the place where he has made a halt, the traveler should say:

In the Name of Allāh,	*Bismi'llāhi*
I put my trust in Allāh,	*tawakkaltu 'ala 'llāh:*
and there is no power,	*wa lā ḥawla*
nor any strength,	*wa lā quwwata*
except through Allāh.	*illā bi'llāhi.*

—for, according to the traditional report *[khabar]*, he will then be told:

You are protected,	*wuqīta*
guarded and shielded.	*wa kufīta wa ḥumīta.*

On mounting his riding camel *[rāḥila]*, he should say:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	*Allāhu Akbar.*

—three times, and:

Praise be to Allāh!	*al-ḥamdu li'llāh.*

—also three times. Then he should say:

Glory to the One who has made	*subḥāna 'lladhī sakhkhara*
this subservient for us (to use),	*la-nā hādha*

2.
Traditional reports concerning the special value of fasting during the "white" days *[al-ayyām al-bīḍ]*.[512]

Shaikh Abū Nasr [Muhammad ibn al-Bannā'] has informed us, on good traditional authority,[513] that the following saying can be traced back to ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

"To fast on the thirteenth day of the month is equivalent in value to fasting for three thousand years.

"To fast on the fourteenth day of the month is equivalent in value to fasting for ten thousand years.

"To fast on the fifteenth day of the month is equivalent in value to fasting for one hundred and thirteen thousand years."

According to a traditional report transmitted by Abū Isḥāq, on the authority of Jarīr (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> To fast on three days out of every month, namely, the thirteenth and the fourteenth and the fifteenth, is equivalent to fasting all year long *[ṣiyām ad-dahr]*.[514]

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of

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[512] See note 499 on p. 351 above.

[513] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report: His own father [Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Ahmad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā']—Hilāl ibn Muhammad—an-Naqqāsh—al-Husain ibn Sufyān—Sulaimān ibn Yazīd, the client [mawlā] of the tribe of Banī Hāshim—ʿAlī ibn Yazīd—ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Hārūn [ibn ʿAntara]—Saʿīd ibn ʿUthmān—ʿAlī ibn al-Husain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[514] According to several traditional reports, the actual practice of fasting all year long *[ṣiyām ad-dahr]* was not encouraged by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), "lest a man should come to believe that this kind of fasting has been ordained by Allāh (Exalted is He), or, through physical incapacity, should become insincere, or because, by fasting all the days of the year, he would do so even on the days when fasting is strictly forbidden." (See: E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *ʿ–W–L*.)

and from finding	*wa ka'ābati 'l-*
that things look bad	*manẓari*
where my family	*fi 'l-ahli*
and property are concerned.	*wa 'l-māl:*

Whenever the traveler proposes to enter a village or a town, it is appropriate for him to say what the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said, namely:

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
Lord of the seven heavens	*Rabba 's-samāwāti 's-sab'i*
and all that they overshadow,	*wa mā aẓlalna:*
Lord of the devils	*wa Rabba 'sh-shayāṭīna*
and all that they lead astray.	*wa mā aḍlalna.*
I beg You to grant me the goodness	*as'alu-ka min khairi*
of this village,	*hādhihi 'l-qaryati*
and the goodness of its people,	*wa khairi ahli-hā*
and the best of what it contains.	*wa khairi mā fī-hā:*
I take refuge with You from its evil,	*wa a'ūdhu bi-ka min sharri-hā*
and the evil of its people,	*wa sharri ahli-hā*
and the worst of what it contains.	*wa sharri mā fī-hā:*
I beg You to grant me	*as'alu-ka*
the loving friendship	*mawaddata*
of the very best of them.	*khiyāri-him:*
and to keep me from having to deal	*wa an tujnuba-nī*
with the worst of the worst of them.	*min sharri ashrāri-him.*

⁂

2b.

More traditional reports concerning prayers of supplication *[ad'iya]* for the protection of the traveler.

For safe refuge from every thief, predatory animal, and harmful nuisance, the traveler should offer the following prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*:

O Allāh, keep watch over us	*Allāhumma 'hrus-nā*
with Your eye that never sleeps,[460]	*bi-'ain-ka 'llatī lā tanām:*
and protect us with Your support	*wa 'kfi-nā bi-rukn-ka 'lladhī*
that cannot be dislodged,	*lā yurām:*
and mercifully shield us	*wa 'rḥam-nā*
with Your power.	*bi-qudrati-ka 'alai-nā*
that we may not perish,	*lā nahlik*
for You are our hope.	*wa Anta rajā'u-nā.*

[The Caliph] 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "I once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> "'If someone says, three times, in the first part of the night:

In the Name of Allāh,	*bismi 'llāhi*
in the presence of whose Name	*'lladhī lā yaḍurru*
there is nothing on earth or in	*ma'a 'smi-hi shai'un fi 'l-arḍi*
heaven that can cause any harm,	*wa lā fi 's-samā':*
for He is the All-Hearing,	*wa Huwa 's-Samī'u 'l-*
the All-Knowing.	*'Alīm.*

> —no sudden calamity will afflict that person before he wakes up in the morning.'"

According to Abū Yūsuf al-Khurāsānī, it was Abū Sa'īd ibn Abi 'r-Rawhā' who recounted the following experience:

"I had lost my way one night on the road to Mecca, when I heard the sound of a voice behind me. I was terrified, so I listened to it—and it was reciting the Qur'ān! Then it caught up with me and said: 'Do you consider yourself lost?' 'Yes,' said I, so it went on to ask: 'Shall I teach you something to say when you are lost, so that you will be guided aright, or when you are lonely, so that you will find yourself in good company, or when you are suffering from insomnia, so that you will be able to get off to sleep?' 'Oh yes,' I replied, so the voice told me to say:

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[460] This is an allusion to Q. 2:255.

In the Name of Allāh,	*bismi'llāhi*
the All-Competent,	*Dhi 'sh-sha'n:*
Sublime in the demonstration	*'Aẓīmi 'l-*
of theTruth,	*burhān:*
Stern in the wielding of authority.	*Shadīdi 's-sulṭān.*
Every day He is about	*kulla yawmin Huwa*
some awesome business.[461]	*fī sha'n.*
I take refuge with Allāh	*a'ūdhu bi'llāhi*
from Satan.	*mina 'sh-shaiṭān.*
Whatever Allāh wills,	*mā shā'a*
comes into being.[462]	*'llāhu kān.*
There is no power,	*lā ḥawla*
nor is there any strength,	*wa lā quwwata*
except through Allāh.	*illā bi'llāh.*

"So I said it, and lo and behold, my companions turned out to be close by! Then I looked for the man, but I could not find him anywhere."

Abū Bilāl, who is one of the respected narrators of tradition *[ruwāt al-ḥadīth]*, remarked:

"I once lost contact with my family at Minā,[463] so I said this, then turned to look in a certain direction—and there I was, reunited with my family!"

According to Abu 'd-Dardā' (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone says, seven times each day:

My Protecting Friend is Allāh,	*inna Waliyyiya 'llāhu 'lladhī*
who has sent down the Book,	*nazzala 'l-Kitāba*
and He befriends	*wa Huwa*
and protects the righteous.[464]	*yatawalla 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn.*
Allāh is enough for me;	*ḥasbiya 'llāhu*
there is no god but He.	*lā ilāha illā Hū:*
In Him I have put my trust,	*'alai-hi tawakkaltu*
for He is the Lord	*wa Huwa Rabbu 'l-*
of the Mighty Throne.[465]	*'arshi 'l-'aẓīm.*

[461] This sentence is a direct quotation from the Qur'ān (55:29).

[462] This sentence is an allusion to several verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān, including Q. 2:117.

[463] Minā is a valley near Mecca, where some of the rites of the Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* are conducted.

[464] This is a direct quotation from the Qur'ān (7:196).

[465] This is a also direct quotation from the Qur'ān (9:129).

—Allāh (Exalted is He) will provide that person with a satisfactory solution to whatever happens to be troubling him, regardless of whether he is honest or deceitful, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills.

The following saying *[hadīth]* is also attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

If someone says, while in distress:

There is no god but Allāh,	*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu 'l-*
the All-Forbearing, the All-Generous,	*Ḥalīmu 'l-Karīm*
Glory be to Allāh,	*subḥāna 'llāhi*
the Lord of the Mighty Throne.	*Rabbi 'l-'Arshi 'l-'Aẓīm*
Praise be to Allāh,	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*
the Lord of All the Worlds.	*Rabbi 'l-'Ālamīn.*

—he will be relieved of his distress, with the permission of Allāh (Exalted is He).

⁂

3.
Concerning the ritual prayer for sufficient protection *[ṣalāt al-kifāya]*.[466]

The ritual prayer for sufficient protection *[ṣalāt al-kifāya]* consists of two cycles *[rak'atān]*, which may be performed at any time whatsoever. In each cycle *[rak'a]*, the worshipper must recite the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥa]* one time, "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" [467] ten times, and:

Allāh will give you	*fa-sa-yakfī-*
sufficient protection against them;	*ka-humu 'llāh:*
He is the All-Hearing,	*wa Huwa 's-Samī'u 'l-*
the All-Knowing. (2:137)	*'Alīm.*

—fifty times. Then, having pronounced the salutation, he should offer the following prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*:

O Allāh! O All-Merciful One!	*yā Allāh: yā Raḥmān:*
O Most Beneficent One!	*yā Mannān:*
O Most Compassionate One!	*yā Ḥannān:*
O You who are glorified	*yā Musabbaḥan*
in every tongue!	*bi-kulli lisān:*
O You whose hands are extended,	*yā Man yadā-hu*
offering all that is good!	*bi'l-khairi mabsūṭatān:*
O Protector of Muḥammad	*yā Kāfiya Muḥammadin*
(Allāh bless him and give him peace)	*(ṣalla 'llāhu 'alai-hi wa sallam)*
from the confederates![468]	*al-aḥzāb:*

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[466] The word *kifāya* is one of many Arabic terms for which it is hard, if not impossible, to find a satisfactory one-word equivalent in English. The basic idea conveyed by the root *k–f–y* is "enough, sufficient," and "sufficiency" is sometimes an adequate translation of *kifāya*. In certain contexts, however, the meaning is "sufficient protection," or even "spiritual protection" (which is ultimately sufficient for the believer, whatever suffering he or she may be exposed to in the outer life).

[467] Sūra 112.

[468] As explained by Yusuf 'Ali in his commentary on his translation of the Qur'ān (33:1): "The fifth year A.H. was a critical year in the external history of early Islām.... The Grand Confederacy against Islām came and invested Medina and failed utterly. It consisted of the Meccan Unbelievers, the desert Arabs of Central Arabia, the Jews previously expelled for treachery from Medina, the Jews remaining in Medina, and the Hypocrites led by 'Abdullāh ibn Ubai."

The Day of [the Battle with] the Confederates *[Yaum al-Aḥzāb]* is also known as *Yaum al-Khandaq* [the Day, or Battle, of the Trench or Moat].

O Protector of Abraham (peace be upon him) from the fires!	*wa yā Kāfiya Ibrāhīma* *('alai-hi 's-salām) an-nīrān:*
O Protector of Moses (peace be upon him) from Pharaoh!	*yā Kāfiya Mūsā* *('alai-hi 's-salām)* *Fir'aun:*
O Protector of Jesus (peace be upon him) from the cruel tyrants!	*yā Kāfiya 'Īsā* *('alai-hi 's-salām)* *al-jabābira*
O Protector of Noah (peace be upon him) from drowning [in the Flood]!	*wa yā Kāfiya Nūḥan* *('alai-hi 's-salām)* *al-gharaq:*
O Protector of Lot (peace be upon him) from the lewdness of his people!	*wa yā Kāfiya Lūṭan* *('alai-hi 's-salām)* *fuḥsha qaumi-h.*
O Protector from everything, but from Whom nothing can be protected!	*yā Kāfiya min kulli shai'in* *wa lā* *yukfā min-hu shai':*
O Protector of 'Ā'isha[469] (may Allāh be well pleased with her) and of Āsiya![470]	*yā Kāfiya 'Ā'ishata* *(raḍiya 'llāhu 'an-hā)* *wa Āsiya:*
Protect me from mighty affliction due to anything at all, so that, with Your Mighty Name "the Almighty," I may have nothing whatsoever to fear and dread.	*ikfi-nī 'aẓīma 'l-balā'i* *min kulli shai'in* *ḥattā lā akhāfa wa lā akhshā* *ma'a 'smi-ka 'l-'aẓīmi 'l-a'ẓami* *shai'ā.*

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[469] As Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in Vol. 1, p. 267:

> We hold a good opinion of all the wives of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). We firmly believe that they are the Mothers of the Believers *[Ummahāt al-Mu'minīn]*, and that 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is one of the most excellent women in the entire universe. Allāh (Exalted is He) has declared her completely innocent of the charges [of marital infidelity] brought against her by the renegades, as we read [in the Qur'ān] and as people will go on reading until the Day of Judgment *[Yaum ad-Dīn]*. *

* This is a reference to the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Those who spread the slander are a gang among you. (24:11)	*inna 'lladhīna jā'ū bi'l-ifki* *'uṣbatun min-kum*
They are liars in the sight of Allāh. (24:13)	*fa-ulā'ika 'inda 'llāhi humu 'l-kādhibūn.*

[470] The lady Āsiya (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon her) maintained her faith in the One Almighty God in the face of cruel torment, inflicted by her husband, Pharaoh. She is mentioned, though not by name, in Q. 66:11.

4.
Concerning the ritual prayer for one's adversaries in litigation [*ṣalāt al-khuṣamā'*].

The ritual prayer for one's adversaries in litigation [*ṣalāt al-khuṣamā'*] consists of four cycles [*raka'āt*], with only one salutation [*taslīma*].

In the first cycle, the worshipper must recite the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] [one time] and "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']"[471] eleven times. In the second cycle, he must recite the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*] [one time], "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" ten times, and "*Qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn*… [Say: 'O unbelievers…']"[472] three times. In the third cycle, he must recite the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*] [one time], "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" ten times, and "*Alhā-kumu 't-takāthuru*… [Gross rivalry distracts you…]"[473] one time. In the fourth cycle, he must recite the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*] [one time], "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']" fifteen times, and the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*][474] one time.

Then he must donate the spiritual reward [earned by his performance of this prayer] to his adversaries in litigation [*khuṣamā'*], so that Allāh may satisfy their claim on the Day of Resurrection [*Yaum al-Qiyāma*], if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills.

He must perform this ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] on seven specific occasions, namely: (1) on the first night of [the month of] Rajab; (2) on the night of the middle of [the month of] Sha'bān; (3) on the last Friday of [the month of] Ramaḍān; (4,5) on each of the two Days of Festival [*al-'Īdain*]; (6) on the Day of 'Arafa; and (7) on the Day of 'Āshūrā'.

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[471] Sūra 112.

[472] Sūra 109.

[473] That is to say, the Sūra of Rivalry in Worldly Increase [*Sūrat at-Takāthur*] (Q. 102).

[474] Q. 2:255.

5.

Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on a Wednesday *[ṣalāt yawm al-arbaʿā']*.

According to a traditional report transmitted by Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī, on the authority of Muʿādh ibn Jabal (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer *[ithnatai ʿasharata rakʿa]* on a Wednesday, at the high point of the day—reciting the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātihat al-Kitāb]* in each cycle, the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[406] one time, "*Qul Huwa'llāhu Ahad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']"[407] three times, and the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge *[al-Muʿawwidhatain]*[408] three times—an angel will call out to him from beside the Heavenly Throne *[ʿArsh]*: "O servant of Allāh, you may now set to work with a clean slate, for all your previous sins have been forgiven!" Allāh will exempt him from the torment of the tomb, and from its narrowness and gloom. He will also exempt him from the terrible hardships of the Resurrection, and He will accept his day's work with the honor conferred on the work of a Prophet *[Nabī]*.

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[406] Q. 2:255.

[407] Sūra 112.

[408] Sūras 113 and 114.

Concerning the Qurʾānic recitation appropriate to the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*.

As for the Qurʾānic recitation appropriate to the the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*, Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> The ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]* should include the recitation of the Sūra [that begins with]:
>
> By the sun and its brightness. (91:1) *wa 'sh-shamsi wa ḍuḥā-hā*
>
> —and [the Sūra of] the Bright Forenoon *[Sūrat aḍ-Ḍuḥā]*.[125]

According to one traditional report,[126] Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When a worshipper performs the twelve cycles of the ritual prayer of the forenoon *[ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā]*, he should recite in each cycle *[rakʿa]*:
>
> - the Opening Sūra of the Book *[Fātiḥat al-Kitāb]*—one time only,
> - the Verse of the Throne *[Āyat al-Kursī]*[127]—one time only, and
> - [the Sūra that begins with]:
>
> Say: "He is Allāh, One!" (112:1) *qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad*—three times.
>
> Seventy thousand angels will thereupon descend from every heaven, bearing white sheets of paper and pens made of light, and they will go on recording good deeds in his favor, until the blast is blown on the Trumpet. Then, when the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]* has arrived, the angels will come to him, and each of the angels will bring a fine suit of clothes and a gift. They will stand by his grave, and they will say: "O occupant of the grave, arise, by the permission of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), for you are one of those who are safe and secure *[āminīn]*."

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[125] The Sūra of the Bright Forenoon *[Sūrat aḍ-Ḍuḥā]* is the 93rd Sūra of the Qurʾān. (In some translations, it is entitled "The Sūra of the Morning Hours.")

[126] ***Author's note:*** The chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report goes back to: ʿUrwa ibn Shuʿaib—his father—his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[127] Q. 2:255.

6.
Concerning the ritual prayer for the removal of the torment of the tomb *[aṣ-ṣalāt li-raf' 'adhāb al-qabr]*.

According to a traditional report, transmitted on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn al-Ḥasan, 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone performs two cycles of ritual prayer *[rak'atain]*—reciting in one of the two cycles the last part of [the Sūra of] the Criterion *[al-Furqān]*, from "*Tabāraka 'lladhī ja'ala fi 's-samā'i burūjan* [Blessed is He who has placed in the heaven mansions of the stars]" until he reaches the end of the Sūra[478]—then starting into the second cycle, and reciting in it, after the Opening Sūra *[al-Fātiḥa]*, from the beginning of the Sūra of the Believers *[Sūrat al-Mu'minīn]* until he reaches "*Fa-tabāraka 'llāhu Aḥsanu 'l-khāliqīn* [So Blessed be Allāh, the Fairest of creators]"[479]—he will be safe from the double-dealing of the jinn and of humankind. He will receive his record sheet with his right hand on the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*.
>
> He will be safe from the torment of the tomb, and safe from the greatest terror *[al-faza' al-akbar]*.[480] The Book will teach him, even if he is not an eager student. He will be relieved of poverty. Allāh will bring him [into compliance with] the law *[ḥukm]*. He will give him insight into His Book, which He has sent down to His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He will instill in him the evidence he will need [in order to make his case] on the Day of Resurrection *[Yawm al-Qiyāma]*. He will install a light in his heart.
>
> Thus he will not grieve when other people grieve, and he will not be afraid when they are afraid. Light will be installed in his faculty of vision, the love of this world will be extracted from his heart, and he will be recorded in the presence of Allāh as one of the champions of truth *[aṣ-ṣiddīqīn]*.

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[478] That is to say, Q. 25:61–77 (from the Sūra of the Criterion *[Sūrat al-Furqān]*) must be recited.

[479] That is to say, Q. 23:1–14 (from the Sūra of the Believers *[Sūrat al-Mu'minīn]*) must be recited.

[480] This is an allusion to Q. 21:103.

7.

Concerning the ritual prayer for help in time of need [*ṣalāt al-ḥāja*].

According to a traditional report, transmitted by Abū Hāshim al-Ayyilī on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If someone has a seriously pressing need, requiring Allāh's help, he should perform the ritual ablution [*wuḍū'*] with proper care. He should then perform two cycles of ritual prayer [*rak'atain*]. In the first cycle he should recite the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] and the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*],[481] and in the second cycle, the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] and "*Āmana 'r-Rasūlu*... [The Messenger believes...]" to the end of that passage.[482] Then, having pronounced the testimony [*tashahhud*] and the salutation [*taslīma*], he should make his plea by offering this prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*], for his need will then be satisfied. The words of the prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*] are as follows:

O Allāh! O Intimate Friend	*Allāhumma: yā Mu'nisa*
of every lonely individual!	*kulli waḥīd:*
O Companion of	*wa yā Ṣāḥiba*
every solitary individual!	*kulli farīd*
O You who are Near, not distant!	*wa yā Qarīban ghaira ba'īd:*
O You who are Present, not absent!	*wa yā Shāhidan ghaira ghā'ib:*
O You who are Invisible,	*wa yā Ghā'iban*
but not vanquished!	*ghaira maghlūb:*
I beseech you	*as'alu-ka*
by invoking Your Name:	*bi'smi-ka*
In the Name of Allāh,	*bi'smi'llāhi 'r-*
the All-Merciful,	*Raḥmāni 'r-*
the All-Compassionate,	*Raḥīm:*
the Ever-Living,	*al-Ḥayyi 'l-*
the Eternally Self-Sustaining,	*Qayyūm:*
the One whom neither slumber	*alladhī lā ta'khudhu-hu*
nor sleep can overtake.[483]	*sinatun wa lā naum.*

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[481] Q. 2:255.

[482] That is to say, the concluding passage of the Sūra of the Cow [*Sūrat al-Baqara*] (Q. 2:285–86).

[483] This invocation echoes the beginning of the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*] Q. 2:255.

Again I beseech you	*wa as'alu-ka*
by invoking Your Name:	*bi'smi-ka*
In the Name of Allāh	*bi'smi'llāhi 'r-*
the All-Merciful,	*Raḥmāni 'r-*
the All-Compassionate,	*Raḥīm:*
the Ever-Living,	*al-Ḥayyi 'l-*
the Eternally Self-Sustaining,	*Qayyūm:*
the One before whom	*alladhī 'anat*
faces are humbled,	*la-hu 'l-wujūh:*
and voices are subdued	*wa khasha'at la-hu 'l-aṣwāt:*
and hearts quake and tremble.	*wa wajilat min-hu 'l-qulūb*
[I beseech You] to bless Muhammad	*an yuṣalliya 'alā Muḥammadin*
and the family of Muhammad	*wa 'alā āli Muḥammad*
and to grant me a happy solution	*wa an taj'ala lī min amrī*
and a way out of my problem,	*farajan wa makhrajan*
and to satisfy my need.	*wa taqḍiya ḥājatī.*

• • • • • • •

This brings us to the end of the Chapter concerning:

The ritual prayer of glorification *[ṣalāt at-tasbīḥ]*.
The ritual prayer for guidance in choosing the best option *[ṣalāt al-istikhāra]*.
The ritual prayer for sufficient protection *[ṣalāt al-kifāya]*.
The ritual prayer for one's adversaries in litigation *[ṣalāt al-khuṣamā']*.
The ritual prayer of those who are emancipated [from the Fire of Hell] in the month of Shawwāl *[ṣalāt al-'utaqā' fī Shawwāl]*.
The ritual prayer for the removal of the torment of the tomb *[aṣ-ṣalāt li-raf' 'adhāb al-qabr]*.
The ritual prayer for help in time of need *[ṣalāt al-ḥāja]*.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn].

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Concerning prayers of supplication *[ad'iya]* to be offered in certain special circumstances.

1.

The prayer of supplication *[du'ā']* for the removal of oppression *[ẓulm]* and precaution against it.

According to a traditional report narrated by Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) taught this prayer of supplication *[du'ā']* to [his son-in-law] 'Alī and [his daughter] Fāṭima[484] (may Allāh be well pleased with them both). He said to the pair of them:

> "If an affliction ever befalls you, if you are afraid of the tyrannical oppression of a worldly ruler *[jaur sulṭān]*, or if the attainment of a long-cherished goal eludes you, perform the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* with proper care, perform two cycles of ritual prayer *[ṣallīyā rak'atain]*, then raise your hands toward heaven and say:

'O Knower of the unseen	*yā 'Ālima 'l-ghaibi*
and of all secret things;	*wa 's-sarā'ir:*
O You who must be Obeyed!	*yā Muṭā':*
O Omnipotent One!	*yā 'Azīz:*
O All-Knowing One!	*yā 'Alīm:*
O Allāh! O Allāh! O Allāh!	*yā Allāh yā Allāh yā Allāh*
O Vanquisher of the confederates	*yā Hāzima 'l-aḥzābi*
for the sake of Muḥammad	*li-Muḥammad*
(Allāh bless him	*(ṣalla 'llāhu 'alai-hi*
and give him peace);	*wa sallam):*
O Deceiver of Pharaoh for the sake	*yā Kā'ida Fir'auna*
of Moses (peace be upon him).	*li-Mūsā ('alai-hi 's-salām):*

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[484] The Lady Fāṭima, daughter of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), became the wife of the latter's cousin, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and bore him two sons, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusain. May Allah be well pleased with them all.

O Savior of Jesus	*yā Munjiya 'Īsā*
(peace be upon him)	*('alai-hi 's-salām)*
from the hands of his oppressors;	*min yadi ẓalamati-h*
O Rescuer of the people of Noah	*yā Mukhalliṣa qaumi Nūḥin*
(peace be upon him)	*('alai-hi 's-salām)*
from drowning [in the Flood];	*mina 'l-gharaq:*
O You who took pity on the tears	*yā Rāḥima 'abrati Ya'qūb*
of Jacob (peace be upon him);	*('alai-hi 's-salām):*
O Reliever of the suffering of Job	*yā Kāshifa ḍurri Ayyūb*
(peace be upon him);	*('alai-hi 's-salām):*
O Rescuer of Jonah	*yā Munjiya Dhi 'n-Nūn*
(peace be upon him)	*('alai-hi 's-salām)*
from the threefold gloom;	*mina 'ẓ-ẓulumāti 'th-thalāth:*
O Doer of all that is good;	*yā Fā'ila kulli khair:*
O Guide to all that is good;	*yā Hādiyan ilā kulli khair:*
O Director to all that is good;	*yā Dāllan 'alā kulli khair:*
O Proprietor of all that is good;	*yā Ahla 'l-khair:*
O Creator of all that is good;	*yā Khāliqa 'l-khair:*
O Proprietor of all good things;	*yā Ahla 'l-khairāt:*
You are Allāh.	*Anta 'llāh:*
I have requested of You	*raghibtu ilai-ka*
that which You already know,	*fī-mā qad 'alimt:*
for You are the One who	*wa Anta*
knows all things invisible.	*'Allāmu 'l-ghuyūb:*
I beseech You	*as'alu-ka an*
to bless Muhammad	*tuṣalliya 'alā Muhammadin*
and the family of Muhammad.'	*wa 'alā āli Muhammad.*

"Then ask for your need to be satisfied, and you will receive a positive response, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills."

* * *

2.
Another prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*.

This is the prayer of supplication offered *[du'ā']* by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) on the Day of the Confederates *[Yawm al-Aḥzāb]*,[485] as reported by Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

O Allāh, I take refuge You,	*Allāhumma innī a'ūdhu bi-ka:*
and with the light of Your Holiness,	*wa bi-nūri Qudsi-k:*
and the splendor of Your Purity,	*wa 'aẓamati Ṭahārati-k:*
and the blessed grace	*wa barakāti*
of Your Majesty,	*Jalāli-k:*
from every plague and blight,	*min kulli āfatin wa 'āhatin*
and from every nocturnal visitor,	*wa ṭāriqi 'l-jinni*
of the jinn or of humankind,	*wa 'l-ins:*
unless it be a visitor who comes	*illā ṭāriqan*
at night with something	*yaṭruqu*
good from You.	*min-ka bi-khair:*
You are indeed my refuge,	*inna-ka Anta 'iyādhī*
so with You do I take refuge,	*fa-bi-ka a'ūdh:*
and You are my shelter,	*wa Anta malādhī*
so with You do I take shelter.	*fa-bi-ka alūdh:*
O You before whom the necks	*yā man dhallat la-hu*
of cruel tyrants bow,	*riqābu 'l-jabābira:*
and by whom all the keys	*wa jami'at la-hu*
of guardianship are held!	*maqālīdu 'r-ri'āya*
I take refuge with the majesty	*a'ūdhu*
of Your Countenance,	*bi-jalāli Wajhi-k*
and the nobility of Your Majesty,	*wa karami Jalāli-k*
from Your scorn and	*min khizyi-ka:*
the removal of Your protection,	*wa kashfi sitri-k:*
and the forgetful neglect	*wa nisyāni*
of Your remembrance,	*dhikri-k:*
and failure to persist	*wa 'l-inṣirāfi*
in giving thanks to You.	*'an shukri-k:*
I am under Your wing	*ana fī kanafi-ka*
by day and by night, and in	*fī laili wa nahārī:*

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[485] See note 468 on p. 340 above.

my sleep, in the time I spend at home,	*wa naumī wa qarārī*
and in my travels and my journeys.	*wa ẓa'nī wa asfārī*
Your remembrance is	*dhikru-ka*
my undergarment,	*shi'ārī*
and Your praise	*wa thanā'u-ka*
is my outer garment.[400]	*dithārī:*

There is no god but You,	*lā ilāha illā Anta*
so hallowed be Your Name,	*tanzīhan li'smi-k:*
and honored be	*wa takrīman*
the glories of Your Countenance.	*li-subuḥāti Wajhi-k*

Grant me asylum from Your scorn,	*ajir-nī min khizyi-k*
and from the agony of Your torment	*wa min sharri 'adhābi-k*
and the wickedness of Your servants,	*wa 'ibādi-k:*
and pitch over me the canopies	*wa 'ḍrib 'alayya*
of Your safekeeping,	*surādiqāti ḥifẓi-k:*
and admit me into the safekeeping	*wa adkhil-nī fī ḥifẓi*
of Your providential care,	*'ināyati-k.*
and guard me against the trials	*wa qi-nī sayyi'āti*
of Your punishment,	*'adhābi-k.*
and enrich me with goodness	*wa aghni-nī bi-khairin*
from You, and with Your Mercy,	*min-ka wa bi-Raḥmati-k:*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*

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[400] The term *shi'ār* is applied to the garment that is worn next to the body, while the *dithār* is defined as "a garment which one wears for warmth, above the *shi'ār*." According to a traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to the Anṣār [Helpers]: "You are the *shi'ār*, while the people in general are the *dithār*."

3.

Concerning the prayer of supplication *[du'ā']* for the dispelling of worries and the settlement of debts.

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Abū Mūsā (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Whenever a person is beset with worry or grief, he should offer a prayer of supplication *[fa-'l-yad'u]* in these words:

O Allāh, I am Your servant	*Allāhumma anā 'abdu-ka*
and the son of Your servant.	*wa 'bnu 'abdi-k:*
My forelock is in Your hand.	*nāṣiyatī bi-yadi-k:*
Your verdict upon me is already cast.	*māḍin fiyya ḥukmu-k:*
Your judgment concerning me is just.	*'adlun fiyya qaḍā'u-k:*

O Allāh, I beseech You,	*Allāhumma innī as'alu-ka*
by every Name of Your Power,	*bi-kulli 'smi ḥawli-k:*
by which You have called Yourself,	*sammaita bi-hi nafsa-k:*
or which You have revealed	*aw anzalta-hu*
in Your Book,	*fī Kitābi-k:*
or which You have taught	*aw 'allamta-hu*
to anyone among Your creatures,	*aḥadan min khalqi-k:*
or which You have kept to Yourself	*awi 'sta'tharta bi-hi*
in the knowledge of the unseen.	*fī 'ilmi 'l-ghaibi 'inda-k.*

[I beg You] to make the Noble Qur'ān	*an taj'ala 'l-Qur'āna 'l-karīma*
the springtime of my heart,	*rabī'a qalbī:*
and the light of my breast,	*wa nūra ṣadrī:*
and the dispersal of my sorrow,	*wa jalā'a ḥuznī:*
and the removal of my grief	*wa dhahāba ghammī*
and my worry.	*wa hammī:*

Someone said: "O Messenger of Allāh, anyone who misses the opportunity to memorize these words will surely be the loser!" "Yes, indeed!" he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace). "So you must repeat them and learn them, for if someone repeats them, as a request for what they contain, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will remove his sorrow and prolong his happiness."

'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said that [her father] Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth *[aṣ-Ṣiddīq]* (may Allāh be well pleased with him), once entered her presence and said: "Did you hear from Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) the prayer of supplication *[du'ā']* that he used to teach us? He mentioned that Jesus the son of Mary *['Īsa 'bnu Maryam]* (peace be upon him) used to teach it to his disciples, and that he used to say: 'Even if one of you happened to be burdened with a debt the size of a whole mountain, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) would settle it for him.'"

To this she replied: "He used to say:

'O Allāh, the Dispeller of care,	*Allāhumma Fārija 'l-hamm:*
the Remover of grief,	*Kāshifa 'l-ghamm:*
Ever-Responsive to the plea	*Mujība*
of those in dire need,	*da'wati 'l-mudṭarrīn:*
the All-Merciful Lord of this world,	*Raḥmāna 'd-dunyā*
the All-Compassionate Lord	*Raḥīma 'l-*
of the Hereafter,	*ākhira:*
I beseech You to bestow upon me	*as'alu-ka an tarḥama-nī*
a mercy from You,	*raḥmatan min 'inda-k:*
by which You will leave me	*tughnī-nī*
in no need of mercy	*bi-hā*
from anyone other than You.'"	*'an raḥmatin min siwā-k.*

4.

Another prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*] for the same purpose [the settlement of debt].

According to a traditional report, [Abū Sa'īd] al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once received a visit from a friend of his, a man who held him in very high esteem. "O Abū Sa'īd," said the friend, "I am burdened with a debt, and I would like you to teach me the Mightiest Name of Allāh (Exalted is He) *[Ismu 'llāhi—ta'ālā—al-A'ẓam]*." So he told him: "If that is what you wish, get up and perform the ritual ablution *[tawaḍḍā']*." The friend got up at once and performed the ritual ablution, whereupon al-Ḥasan told him to say:

O Allāh! O Allāh! You are Allāh!	*yā Allāh: yā Allāh: Anta 'llāh:*
Yes indeed, by Allāh, You are Allāh!	*balā wa 'llāhi Anta 'llāh:*
There is no god but You!	*lā ilāha illā Ant:*
Allāh! Allāh! Allāh!	*Allāh: Allāh: Allāh:*
By Allāh, there is no god but Allāh!	*wa 'llāhi lā ilāha illa 'llāh:*
Settle my debt for me, and	*aqḍi 'an-niya 'd-dain:*
provide for me after the debt [is settled].	*wa 'rzuq-nī ba'da 'd-dain.*

When the next morning came around, the man discovered a hundred thousand genuine dirhams [silver coins] in the room where he performed his private prayers. These assorted silver coins were stored inside a traveling case, the top of which bore the inscription:

Even if you had asked	*law sa'alta*
for more than this,	*akthara min hādhā*
We would have granted	*la-a'ṭainā-k.*
your request, so why	*fa-kaifa*
did you not ask for	*lam tas'ali 'l-*
the Garden of Paradise?	*Janna*

The man came to al-Ḥasan (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) and told him about this, so he accompanied his friend back to his house, where he saw the silver coins with his own eyes. Then the man said: "I feel a sense of remorse, inasmuch as I did not ask Allāh to grant me the

Garden of Paradise." So al-Ḥasan said: "He who taught you [the invocation of] this Name *[Ism]*[487] had no intention, in teaching it to you, other than to do you a good turn, for I would normally treat this Name as my personal secret. [The cruel governor] al-Ḥajjāj[488] must not get to hear it, for no one at all would then be able to escape from him!"

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[487] The Arabic word *ism*, for which "name" is in most instances a perfectly satisfactory translation, can sometimes mean "the act of calling by a name." The term "appellation" conveyed this latter meaning in archaic English usage, but in the modern language it almost always means "an identifying name or title."

[488] As governor of the province of ʿIrāq, in the time of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf was notorious for his cruelty and brutality. He killed many righteous men who incurred his displeasure, including Abū ʿAbdi'llāh [or Abū Muhammad] Saʿīd ibn Jubair ibn Hishām al-Asadī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), a pious Tābiʿī [member of the generation following that of the Companions], who was renowned for his learning in Qur'ānic exegesis *[tafsīr]*, Prophetic tradition *[ḥadīth]* and Islāmic jurisprudence *[fiqh]*.

5.

Another prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*, taught by Gabriel (peace be upon him) to our Prophet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

This prayer of supplication *[du'ā']* was taught by Gabriel (peace be upon him) to our Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), at the time when he set out from Mecca, the Ennobled City *[al-Musharrafa]*, and headed for Mount Ḥirā', in fear of Quraish[489] and in pursuit of his purpose and provision.

According to the account narrated by Abū Bakr Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth *[aṣ-Ṣiddīq]* (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Gabriel (peace be upon him) said:

"O Muḥammad, Allāh (Exalted is He) extends to you the greeting of peace *[yuqri'u-ka 's-salām]*. He has taught me a prayer of supplication *[du'ā']* for you to offer, so that Allāh may establish a protective screen between you and them. Shall I teach it to you now?" "Yes, O Gabriel," said the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so he told him to say:

O Supremely Great One!	*yā Kabīru kullu kabīr:*
O All-Hearing One!	*yā Samī':*
O All-Seeing One!	*yā Baṣīr:*
O You who have no partner	*yā man lā sharīka la-hu*
and no minister!	*wa lā wazīr:*
O Creator of the sun	*yā Khāliqa 'sh-shamsi*
and the shining moon!	*wa 'l-qamari 'l-munīr:*
O Safeguard of the fearful wretch	*yā 'Iṣmata 'l-bā'isi 'l-*
who seeks protection!	*khā'ifi 'l-mustajīr:*
O Nourisher of the little child!	*yā Rāziqa 't-tifli 's-saghīr:*
O Mender of the broken bone!	*yā Jābira 'l-'aẓmi 'l-kasīr:*
O Crusher of every stubborn tyrant!	*yā Qāṣima kulli jabbārin 'anīd:*

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[489] Quraish is the name of the Arab tribe into which the Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was born.

I beseech You	*as'alu-ka*
and entreat You with	*wa ad'ū-ka*
the supplication,	*du'ā'a 'l-*
of the wretched pauper	*bā'isi 'l-faqīr*
the supplication	*du'ā'a 'l-*
of the destitute cripple,	*muḍṭarri 'ḍ-ḍarīr:*
and I beg You	*as'alu-ka*
by the nodes of glory[490]	*bi-ma'āqidi 'l-'izzi*
concentrated in Your Throne,	*min 'arshi-k:*
and the keys of mercy	*wa mafātīḥi 'r-raḥmati*
contained within Your Book,	*min kitābi-k:*
and by the eight Names inscribed	*wa bi'l-asmā'i 'th-thamāniyati 'l-*
on the horn of the sun,	*maktūbati 'alā qarni 'sh-shams:*
to do such-and-such	*an taf'ala bī*
and such-and-such with me.	*kadhā wa kadhā.*

* * * * * * *

This brings us to the end of the Chapter concerning
prayers of supplication *[ad'iya]* to be offered
in certain special circumstances.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn].

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[490] The word *ma'qid* (of which *ma'āqid* is the plural form) signifies "the place where a cord or rope is tied, knit, or tied in a knot or knots, a joint, an articulation." According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the somewhat unusual supplication *as'alu-ka bi-ma'āqidi 'l-'izzi min 'arshi-k* is understood to mean: "I beg You by the properties wherein consists the title of Your Throne to glory," or "by the places wherein those properties are [as it were] knit together," or simply "by the glory of Your Throne." The use of this particular supplication is said to be viewed with disapproval by the school *[madhhab]* of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow his mercy upon him). (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic–English Lexicon*, art. *'–Q–D*.)

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Concerning the prayers of supplication *[adʿiya]* offered after the obligatory ritual prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-farḍ]*; the supplication following the recital of the entire Qurʾān *[duʿāʾ al-khatma]*; etc.

1.

Concerning the prayers of supplication *[adʿiya]* that may be offered immediately after the obligatory ritual prayers *[aṣ-ṣalawāt al-farḍ]*.

a.

The prayer of supplication *[duʿāʾ]* that is most appropriately offered immediately after the ritual prayer of the early morning *[ṣalāt al-ghadāh]*, and also immediately after the ritual prayer of the late afternoon *[ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr]*.

As for the prayer of supplication *[duʿāʾ]* that is most appropriately offered immediately after the ritual prayer of the early morning *[ṣalāt al-ghadāh]*, and also immediately after the ritual prayer of the late afternoon *[ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr]*, it is expressed in the following words:

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
to You be praise in thankfulness,	*la-ka 'l-ḥamdu shukran*
and to You	*wa la-ka 'l-mannu*
be gratitude in abundance.	*faḍlā*
By Your grace	*bi-niʿmati-ka*
may good works be accomplished!	*tamma 'ṣ-ṣāliḥāt.*
We beg You, O Allāh,	*nasʾalu-ka 'llāhumma*
to grant a prompt relief—	*farajan qarībā:*

for You have always	*fa-inna-ka lam*
been Responsive—[491]	*tazal Mujībā*
and a seemly patience,[492]	*wa ṣabran jamīlā*
and an immunity	*wa ʿāfiyatan*
from all afflictions,	*min jamīʿi 'l-balāyā*
and a security	*wa salāmatan*
from the path of disasters,	*min ṭarīqi 'r-razāyā:*
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
let our gathering together	*'jʿal 'jtimāʿa-nā 'jtimāʿan*
be mercifully blessed,	*marḥūman*
and may we be safely protected	*wa tafarruqa-nā*
when we go our separate ways.	*tafarruqan maʿṣūmā:*
Let no one amongst us	*wa lā tajʿal*
be unprosperous,	*fī-nā shaqiyyan*
and let no one be deprived.	*wa lā maḥrūmā*
Do not make us turn in poverty	*wa lā taruddu-nā bi'l-fāqati*
to others apart from You.	*ilā ghairi-k:*
Do not deprive us	*wa lā taḥrim-nā*
of the wealth of Your goodness,	*siʿata khairi-ka*
and the real experience	*wa ḥaqīqata 't-tawakkuli*
of total trust in You,	*ʿalai-ka*
and the genuine desire	*wa khāliṣa 'r-raghbati*
for that which is in Your presence.	*fī-mā ladai-k:*
Fill our hearts with enrichment	*wa 'mlaʾ qulūba-nā*
provided by You,	*min-ka 'l-ghinā:*
and clothe our faces with modesty	*wa 'ksu wujūha-nā*
in deference to You.	*min-ka 'l-ḥayāʾ:*
And grant us the goodness	*wa 'rzuq-nā*
of the Hereafter,	*khaira 'l-ākhirati*
as well as of this world,	*wa 'd-dunyā:*
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*
O Lord!	*yā Rabb:*
O Allāh, grant that we may enjoy	*Allāhumma 'rzuq-nā*
the goodness of the morning	*khaira 'ṣ-ṣabāḥi*
and the goodness of the evening,	*wa khaira 'l-masāʾi*
and the goodness	*wa khaira 'l-*
of the verdict of fate	*qaḍāʾi*
and the goodness	*wa khaira 'l-*
of the decree of destiny.	*qadar*

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[491] This is an allusion to Q. 11:61.

[492] This is an allusion to Q. 70:5.

And keep away from us	*wa 'ṣrif 'an-nā*
the evil of the morning	*sharra 'ṣ-ṣabāḥi*
and the evil of the evening,	*wa sharra 'l-masā'i*
and the evil of the verdict of fate	*wa sharra 'l-qaḍā'i*
and the evil of the decree of destiny.	*wa sharra 'l-qadar*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
whatever You have sent down	*wa mā anzalta*
on this day—in the way of goodness,	*fī hādha 'l-yawmi min khairin*
welfare, security, profit,	*wa 'āfiyatin wa salāmatin*
and plentiful sustenance—	*wa ghanīmatin wa si'ati rizq:*
grant us the most abundant	*fa-'j'al la-nā fī-hi*
portion and share therein!	*awfara 'l-ḥaẓẓi wa 'n-naṣīb.*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
and whatever You have sent down	*wa mā anzalta*
—in the way of wickedness,	*min sū'in*
affliction, evil,	*wa balā'in wa sharrin*
sickness, and mischief—	*wa dā'in wa fitna:*
keep it away from us,	*fa-'ṣrif-hu 'an-nā*
and from all the Muslim men	*wa 'an jamī'i 'l-muslimīna*
and Muslim women,	*wa 'l-muslimāt*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*

* * *

b.

Another prayer of supplication *[du'ā']*.[493]

Praise be to Allāh,	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi 'lladhī*
Who has encompassed	*aḥāṭa*
every single thing	*bi-kulli shai'in*
in knowledge,[494]	*'ilmā:*
and Who has computed	*wa aḥṣā*
every single thing	*kulla shai'in*
in number.[495]	*'adadā.*
There is no god but He,	*lā ilāha illā Hū:*
the Possessor of Grandeur	*Ahlu 'l-kibriyā'i*
and Might,	*wa 'l-'aẓama :*
the Protective Provider	*wa Waliyyu 'l-*
of saving grace	*ghauthi*
and mercy,[496]	*wa 'r-raḥma:*
the Ruler of this world	*Māliku 'd-dunyā*
and the Hereafter,	*wa 'l-ākhira:*
Almighty in sovereign sway,	*'Aẓīmu 'l-malakūt:*
Stern in the wielding of power,	*Shadīdu 'l-jabarūt:*
Gentle and Kind	*Laṭīfun*
to whatever He will,[497]	*li-mā yashā':*
Effective in doing	*Fa''ālun*
whatever He wishes,[498]	*li-mā yurīd:*
the First of everything,	*Awwalu kulli shai'in*
and the Creator of everything,	*wa Khāliqu kulli shai'in*
and the Sustainer thereof.	*wa Rāziqu-h.*
O Allāh, let our morning be	*Allāhumma 'j'al ṣabāḥa-nā*
a good and righteous morning,	*ṣabāḥan ṣāliḥā*
not one that is shameful	*lā mukhziyan*
or disgraceful.	*wa lā fāḍiḥā*

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[493] Although Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has presented this supplication *[du'ā']* without introductory comment, we may conclude from the wording of it that it is appropriately offered after the ritual prayer of dawn/daybreak *[ṣalāt al-fajr/aṣ-ṣubḥ]*, presumably as an alternative to the one presented above.

[494] This is an allusion to Q. 65:12.

[495] This is an allusion to Q. 18:47.

[496] The literal meaning of the word *ghauth* (translated as "saving grace") is "abundant rain." This is an allusion to Q. 42:28.

[497] Q. 12:100.

[498] Q 11:107 and 85:16.

Greatness *[takbīrāt]* are proclaimed, before the Qur'ānic recitation. With each affirmation *[takbīra]*, the worshipper raises his hands [to the lobes of his ears] and says:

Allāh is Supremely Great,	*Allāhu Akbar*
immensely so!	*kabīrā:*
And praise be to Allāh, abundantly!	*wa 'l-ḥamdu li'llāhi kathīrā*
And glory be to Allāh,	*wa subḥāna 'llāhi*
both early and late.	*bukratan wa aṣīlā:*
And Allāh's blessings	*wa ṣalawātu 'llāhi*
upon our Master	*'alā Sayyidi-nā*
Muḥammad the Prophet,	*Muḥammadini 'n-Nabiyyi*
and his family,	*wa āli-hi*
and may He grant [him] peace.	*wa sallama taslīmā.*

When he has finished affirming Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīr]*, he must seek refuge with Him *[ista'ādha]*, and recite the Opening Sūra *[al-Fātiḥa]*. Then [in the first cycle] he should recite [the Sūra that begins with the words]: "*Sabbiḥi 'sma Rabbi-ka 'l-A'lā*... [Glorify the Name of your Lord the Most High...]."[340] In the second cycle, he should recite [the Sūra that begins with the words]: "*Hal atā-ka ḥadīthu 'l-ghāshiya* [Have you received the story of the Calamity?]"[341]

As an acceptable alternative, he may recite, in the first cycle, [the Sūra that begins with the words]: "*Qāf: wa 'l-Qur'āni 'l-majīd* [*Qāf*: By the glorious Qur'ān!]."[342] and in the second cycle, [the Sūra that begins with the words]: "*Iqtarabati 's-sā'atu wa 'nshaqqa 'l-qamar* [The Hour has drawn near and the moon has been split in two]."[343] A statement to this effect has been attributed to our Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

The recitation of yet other Sūras [instead of those mentioned above] is also permissible.

Concerning the postponement of the introductory invocation *[al-istiftāḥ]* until the moment of the Qur'ānic recitation, there are likewise two [conflicting] reports. According to one of them, it should be pronounced immediately after the consecratory affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness *[takbīrat al-iḥrām]*. According to the other,

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[340] That is to say, the Sūra of the Most High *[Sūrat al-A'lā]*. (Q. 87.)

[341] That is to say, the Sūra of the Calamity *[Sūrat al-Ghāshiya]*. (Q. 88.)

[342] That is to say, the Sūra entitled "Qāf" *[Sūra Qāf]*. (Q. 50.)

[343] That is to say, the Sūra of the Moon *[Sūrat al-Qamar]*. (Q. 54.)

c.

Another prayer of supplication *[duʿāʾ]*.[500]

Praise be to Allāh,	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi 'lladhī*
Who created the heavens	*khalaqa 's-samāwāti*
and the earth.[501]	*wa 'l-arḍ:*
There is no god but He.	*lā ilāha illā Hū:*
In Him I have put my trust,	*ʿalai-hi tawakkaltu*
and He is the Lord	*wa Huwa Rabbu 'l-*
of the Mighty Throne.[502]	*ʿarshi 'l-ʿaẓīm.*
Glory be to Him,	*subḥāna-hu*
and Exalted is He,	*wa taʿālā*
far above and beyond	*ʿammā*
whatever they associate	*yushrikūn.*
[with Him].[503]	
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma 'ghfir*
forgive us our sins:	*la-nā dhunūba-nā*
those we have committed openly,	*mā ẓaharnā*
as well as those we have kept secret,	*wa mā asrarnā*
those we have concealed,	*wa mā akhfainā*
as well as those we have made public,	*wa mā aʿlannā*
and those	*wa mā*
of which You are More Aware	*Anta Aʿlamu bi-hi*
than we ourselves.	*min-nā.*
O Allāh, grant us Your approval	*Allāhumma aʿṭi-nā riḍā-ka*
in this world and the Hereafter,	*fi 'd-dunyā wa 'l-ākhira:*
and let our final outcome	*wa 'khtim la-nā*
be a state of bliss,	*bi's-saʿādati*
of witnessing and forgiveness.	*wa 'sh-shahādati wa 'l-maghfira*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma 'jʿal*
let the last part of our lives be good,	*ākhira aʿmāri-nā*
and let our endings be good,	*khairan wa khawātima-nā khairan*
and let the best of all our days	*wa khaira ayyāmi-nā*
be the day when we shall meet You.	*yauma nalqā-k*

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[500] As in the preceding instance, Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has presented this supplication *[duʿāʾ]* without introductory comment. In this case, however, we may conclude from the wording of it that it may appropriately be offered after any of the ritual prayers *[ṣalawāt]*. (Allāh knows best!)

[501] This declaration of praise occurs in Q. 6:1.

[502] This affirmation occurs in Q. 9:129.

[503] Q. 10:18, 16:1 and 30:40.

O Allāh, we take refuge with You	*Allāhumma innā na'ūdhu bi-ka*
from the disappearance	*min zawāli*
of Your blessing,	*ni'mati-ka*
from the surprise attack	*wa min fujā'ati*
of Your affliction,	*niqmati-ka*
and from the alteration	*wa min taḥwīli*
of Your gracious favor	*'āfiyati-k*
O Allāh, we take refuge with You	*Allāhumma innā na'ūdhu bi-ka*
from the onslaught of misery,	*min daraki 'sh-shaqā'i*
from the trouble of adversity,	*wa jahdi 'l-balā'i*
from the transformation of prosperity,	*wa taghyīri 'n-na'mā'i*
and from unfortunate calamity.	*wa sū'i 'l-qaḍā'*
We take refuge with You	*wa na'ūdhu bi-ka*
from all things loathsome and bad,	*min jamī'i 'l-makārihi wa 'l-aswā'.*
and we beg You, O Allāh,	*wa nas'alu-ka 'llāhumma*
to grant us the very best.	*khaira 'l-'aṭā'i.*
O Allāh, we beg You	*Allāhumma innā nas'alu-ka*
to remove our sickness,	*an takshifa saqama-nā*
to heal our illness,	*wa tubri'a maraḍa-nā*
to bestow Your mercy on our dead,	*wa tarḥama mawtā–nā*
to make our bodies healthy,	*wa tuṣaḥḥiḥa abdāna-nā*
and to make them	*wa tukhliṣa-hā*
sincerely devoted to You.	*la-k:*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
let our religious convictions	*akhliṣ*
be sincere!	*adyāna-nā.*
[We beg You]	
to preserve our safekeeping,	*wa an taḥfaẓa 'iyādha-nā*
to expand	*wa tashraḥa*
[the feeling in] our breasts,[904]	*ṣudūra-nā*
to direct the management	*wa tudabbira*
of our affairs,	*umūra-nā*
to put our children	*wa tuqabbira*
through useful training,	*awlāda-nā*
to overlook our misbehavior,	*wa tastura jurma-nā*
to reinstate us	*wa taruddā*
though we have been absent,	*ghiyāba-nā*
and to confirm our commitment	*wa an tuthbita-nā*
to our religion.	*'alā dīni-nā*
We beg You for goodness	*wa nas'alu-ka khairan*
and right guidance.	*wa rushdā*
O Allāh! Our Lord, we beg You	*Allāhumma Rabba-nā*
to give us that which is good	*innā nas'alu-ka an*
in this world,	*tu'tiya-nā ḥasanatan fi 'd-dunyā*
and that which is good	*wa ḥasanatan*

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[904] This is an allusion to Q 20:25–28.

in the Hereafter,	*fī 'l-ākhira*
and to let us die as Muslims,	*wa an tatawaffa-nā muslimīn*
through Your mercy.	*bi-raḥmati-k*

Guard us against	*wa qi-nā*
the torment of the Fire,	*'adhāba 'n-nār*
and the torment of the tomb,	*wa 'adhāba 'l-qabr*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*
O Lord of All the Worlds!	*yā Rabba 'l-'ālamīn*

◆

It was al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said: "I once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

> "The superior excellence of the Day of Congregation [*Yaum al-Jum'a*] during Ramaḍān, over all the other days, is like the superior excellence of Ramaḍān over all the other months.'"

◆

2.
The prayer of supplication that should be offered after the recital of the entire Qurʾān *[duʿāʾ khatmat al-Qurʾān]*.

As for the special prayer of supplication *[duʿāʾ]* that should be offered when the recital of the entire Qurʾān *[khatmat al-Qurʾān]* has been completed, the wording of it is as follows:

Allāh the Almighty has told the truth,	*ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'l-ʿAẓīmu'lladhī*
He who created the Creation,	*khalaqa 'l-khalqa*
and so originated it;	*fa-'btadaʿa-h*
He who established the [true] religion,	*wa sanna 'd-dīna*
and laid down its laws;[505]	*wa sharaʿa-h:*
He who caused the light to shine,	*wa nawwara 'n-nūra*
and made it radiate;	*wa shaʿshaʿa-h:*
He who appointed sustenance,	*wa qaddara 'r-rizqa*
and rendered it amply sufficient;	*wa wassaʿa-h:*
He who inflicted injury	*wa ḍarra*
on His Creation,	*khalqa-hu*
and provided it with benefit;	*wa nafaʿa-h:*
He who made the water flow,	*wa ajra 'l-māʾa*
and caused it to gush forth;	*wa anbaʿa-h:*
He who made the heaven	*wa jaʿala 's-samāʾa*
a roof well-kept[506]	*saqfan maḥfūẓan*
and held aloft,	*marfūʿan*
which He raised up.[507]	*rafaʿa-h*
and the earth a carpet ,	*wa 'l-arḍa bisāṭan*
which He laid down[508]	*waḍaʿa-h*
He who set the moon in motion,	*wa sayyara 'l-qamara*
and caused it to rise and shine.	*wa aṭlaʿa-h*
Glory be to Him!	*subḥāna-hu*
How exalted is His status,	*mā aʿlā makāna-hu*
and how elevated!	*wa arfaʿa-h*

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[505] This is an allusion to Q. 42:13.

[506] This is an allusion to Q. 21:32

[507] This is an allusion to Q. 52:5

[508] This is a paraphrase of Q. 71:19.

How splendid is His sovereignty,	*wa a'azza sultāna-hu*
and how unique!	*wa abda'a-h:*
None can undo what He has made,	*lā rādda li-mā sana'a-h.*
and none can alter	*wa lā mughayyira*
what He has created.	*li-mā 'khtara'a-h:*
None can humiliate those	*wa lā mudhilla*
whom He has raised in dignity,	*li-man rafa'a-h*
and none can dignify those	*wa lā mu'izza*
whom He has reduced to degradation.	*li-man wada'a-h*
None can separate that	*wa lā mufarriqa*
which He has joined together	*li-mā jama'a-h*
No partner has He,	*wa lā sharīka la-h*
and there is no god besides Him.	*wa lā ilāha ma'a-h*

Allāh has told the truth, He who	*sadaqa 'llāhu 'lladhī*
has prearranged the pattern	*dabbara 'd-*
of the ages,	*duhūr:*
and predetermined	*wa qaddara 'l-*
the course of destiny,	*maqdūr:*
and settled the conduct of all affairs;	*wa sarrafa 'l-umūr:*
and the alternation of	*wa ta'āqaba 'd-*
[daylight and] the dark;	*dayājūr:*
He who facilitates	*wa sahhala 'l-*
that which is difficult,	*ma'sūr:*
and makes even easier	*wa yassara 'l-*
that which is easy;	*maisūr:*
He who has tamed the raging sea;[509]	*wa sakhkhara 'l-bahra 'l-masjūr:*
He who sent down the Criterion	*wa anzala 'l-Furqāna*
and the Light,[510]	*wa 'n-Nūr:*
and the Torah and the Gospel[511]	*wa 't-Taurāta wa 'l-Injīla*
and the Psalms;[512]	*wa 'z-Zabūr:*
He who has sworn	*wa aqsama*
by the Criterion[513]	*bi'l-Furqāni*
and the Mount,	*wa 'ṭ-Ṭūr:*
and the Book inscribed	*wa 'l-Kitābi 'l-masṭūr:*
on the parchment unrolled,	*fi 'r-raqqi 'l-manshūr*
and the House frequented.[514]	*wa 'l-Baiti 'l-ma'mūr:*

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[509] This is an allusion to Q. 52:6.

[510] The Qur'ānic verses *[āyāt]* alluded to here include Q. 5:15, 21:48, 25:1 and 64:8.

[511] Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has mentioned His sending down of the Torah *[at-Taurāh]* and the Gospel *[al-Injīl]* in several verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān, including 3:1–4, in which He also mentions the Criterion *[al-Furqān]*

[512] Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has mentioned the Psalms *[Zabūr]* in three verses *[āyāt]* of the Qur'ān: 4:163, 17:55 and 21:105.

[513] In uttering the words:

> *Qāf.* By the glorious Qur'ān. (50:1)   *Qāf wa 'l-Qur'āni 'l-majīd*

—Allāh (Exalted is He) is implicitly swearing by the Criterion *[Furqān]*, which He uses as another name for the Qur'ān in several verses *[āyāt]* of His Book, notably 2:185 and 25:1.

[514] These four lines constitute a slightly paraphrased version of the first four verses *[āyāt]* of the Sūra of the Mount *[Sūrat at-Tūr]* (Q. 52:1–4).

and the Raising and the Resurrection,	*wa 'l-ba'thi wa 'n-nushūr:*
He who is the Creator of darkness	*wa jā'ilu 'ẓ-ẓulumāti*
and light,	*wa 'n-nūr:*
and of children,	*wa 'l-wildāni*
and of the heavenly brides,[515]	*wa 'l-ḥūr:*
and of the Gardens and palaces	*wa 'l-jināni wa 'l-quṣūr*
[of Paradise].	

Allāh causes whom He will to hear.	*inna 'llāha yusmi'u man yashā':*
You cannot make yourself heard	*wa mā anta bi-musmi'in*
by those who are in the graves.	*man fi 'l-qubūr.*
(35:22)	

Allāh the Almighty has told the truth,	*ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'l-'Aẓīmu*
He who is Omnipotent,	*'lladhī*
and therefore reigns Supreme,	*'azza fa-'rtafa':*
and is so Exalted	*wa 'alā*
that He cannot be surmounted;	*fa-'mtana':*
He before whose Might and Majesty	*wa dhalla kullu shai'in*
all things are humbly submissive	*li-'aẓamati-hi*
and subdued;	*wa khaḍa':*
He who lifted up the sky	*wa samaka 's-samā'a*
and raised it aloft,[516]	*wa rafa':*
and laid out the earth	*wa farasha 'l-arḍa*
and spread it wide;[517]	*wa awsa':*
He who made the rivers gush forth,	*wa fajjara 'l-anhāra*
and so caused them to flow;[518]	*fa-anba':*
He who partitioned	*wa maraja*
the seas and oceans,[519]	*'l-biḥāra*
and so made them become full;	*fa-atra':*
He who tamed the stars,	*wa sakhkhara 'n-nujūma*
and so caused them to rise and shine;	*fa-aṭla':*
He who sent forth the clouds,	*wa arsala 's-saḥāba*
so that they rose high in the sky;	*fa-'rtafa':*
He who brightened the light,	*wa nawwara 'n-nūra*
so that it shone;	*fa-lama':*
He who sent down the rain,	*wa anzala 'l-ghaitha*
so that it fell;	*fa-hama':*
He who spoke to Moses,	*wa kallama Mūsā*
and so let him hear;	*fa-asma'*
He who revealed Himself	*wa tajallā*
to the mountain,	*li'l-jabala*
so that it was shattered to pieces;[520]	*fa-taqaṭṭa':*

[515] See note 9 on p. 9 above.

[516] This is an allusion to Q. 79:27,28.

[517] This is an allusion to Q. 51:48.

[518] This is an allusion to Q. 18:33.

[519] This is an allusion to Q. 25:53 and 55:20,21.

[520] The story of Moses (peace be upon him) and the mountain is told by Allāh (Exalted is He) in Q. 7:143.

He who has given and taken away;	*wa wahaba wa-naza'*
He who has inflicted injury	*wa ḍarra*
and provided benefit;	*wa-nafa'*
He who has bestowed and withheld;	*wa a'ṭā wa mana'*
He who has established the practices	*wa sanna*
and laid down the laws	*wa shara'*
[of religion];	
He who has set apart	*wa farraqa*
and joined together;	*wa jama'*
He who has brought you all into being	*wa ansha'a-kum*
from a single soul,	*min nafsin wāḥida*
so that [here you have] a lodging-place	*fa-mustaqarrun*
and a repository.[521]	*wa mustawda'*
Allāh has told the truth,	*ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'l-*
the Almighty, the Ever-Relenting,	*'Aẓīmu 't-Tawwāb*
the All-Forgiving, the Ever-Giving;	*al-Ghafūru 'l-Wahhāb.*
He before whose Might and Majesty	*alladhī khaḍa'at*
all necks are humbly bowed,	*li-'aẓamati-hi 'r-riqāb:*
He to whose All-Compelling Power	*wa dhallat*
the obstinate meekly submit;	*li-jabarūti-hi 'ṣ-ṣi'āb:*
He toward whom	*wa lānat*
the stubbornly unyielding	*la-hu 'sh-shadādu 'ṣ-*
soften and relax;	*ṣilāb:*
He in whose work	*wa 'stadallat*
intelligent minds find	*bi-ṣan'ati-hi 'l-*
evidence that leads to understanding;	*albāb:*
He whose praise	*wa yusabbiḥu*
is extolled by the thunder	*bi-ḥamdi-hi 'r-ra'du*
and the clouds,	*wa 's-saḥāb:*
by the lightning and the mirage,	*wa 'l-barqu wa 's-sarāb:*
and by the trees and the animals;	*wa 'sh-shajaru wa 'd-dawābb:*
He who is the Lord of lords;	*Rabbu 'l-arbāb*
the Originator of all secondary causes,	*wa Musabbibu 'l-asbāb:*
the Revealer of the Book;	*wa Munazzilu 'l-Kitāb:*
the Creator of His creation	*Khāliqu khalqi-hi*
from the dust,	*mina 't-turāb*
the Forgiver of sin,	*Ghāfiru 'dh-dhanb*
the Accepter of repentance,	*wa Qābilu 't-tawb*
the Stern in punishment.	*Shadīdu 'l-'iqāb*
There is no god but He.	*lā ilāha illā Hu*
In Him I have put my trust,	*'alai-hi tawakkaltu*
and unto Him I turn. (13:30)	*wa ilai-hi matāb*
Allāh has told the truth, He who is	*ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'lladhī*
always Majestic,	*lam yazal Jalīlan*
always a Source of Guidance.	*Dalīlā*
The truth He has told,	*ṣadaqa*

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[521] These four lines constitute a partial and slightly paraphrased quotation of Q. 6:99.

He who is all I need	*man ḥasbī*
in the way of a Guarantor.[522]	*bi-hi Kafīlā:*
The truth He has told,	*ṣadaqa mani*
He whom I have	*'ttakhadhtu-hu*
singled out as a Trustee.[523]	*Wakīlā:*
Allāh, the Guide who shows a way	*ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'l-Hādī ilai-hi*
to reach Him, has told the truth.	*sabīlā:*
Allāh has told the truth,	*ṣadaqa 'llāhu*
and who is more truthful	*wa man aṣdaqu*
than He in telling?[524]	*min-hu qīlā.*

Allāh has told the truth,	*ṣadaqa 'llāhu*
and His communications	*wa ṣadaqa*
have conveyed the truth,	*anbā'u-h:*
and His Prophets have told the truth.	*wa ṣadaqat anbiyā'u-h:*
Allāh has told the truth,	*ṣadaqa 'llāhu*
and His blessings	*wa ṣaḥat*
have been made manifest.	*ālā'u-h:*
Allāh has told the truth,	*ṣadaqa 'llāhu*
and His earth and His heaven	*wa ṣadaqat arḍu-hu*
have also told the truth.	*samā'u-h:*

Allāh has told the truth,	*ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'l-*
[Allāh] the Unique,	*Wāḥidu 'l-*
the Eternally Pre-existent,	*Qadīm:*
the Noble, the All-Generous,	*al-Mājidu 'l-Karīm:*
the Ever-Present Witness,	*ash-Shāhidu 'l-*
the All-Knowing,	*'Alīm:*
the All-Forgiving,	*al-Ghafūru 'r-*
the All-Compassionate,	*Raḥīm:*
the Ever-Appreciative,	*ash-Shakūru 'l-*
the All-Forbearing.	*Ḥalīm:*

Say: "Allāh has told the truth;	*qul ṣadaqa 'llāh:*
so follow the creed of Abraham."	*fa-'ttabi'ū millata Ibrāhīm*
(3:95)	

Allāh has told the truth,	*ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'l-*
[Allāh] the Almighty—	*'Aẓīmu 'lladhī*
there is no god but He—	*lā ilāha illā Hū*
the All-Merciful,	*ar-Raḥmānu 'r-*
the All-Compassionate	*Raḥīm:*
the Ever-Living, the All-Knowing,	*al-Ḥayyu 'l-'Alīm:*
the Ever-Living, the All-Generous.	*al-Ḥayyu 'l-Karīm*

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[522] This is an allusion to Q. 16:91.

[523] As Allāh Himself (Almighty and Glorious is He) has assured us in a verse [*āya*] of the Qur'ān:

And Allāh is sufficient as Trustee. (4:81)	*wa kafā bi'llāhi Wakīlā*

[524] These words echo the question posed at the end of the verse [*āya*] of the Qur'ān:

and who is more truthful	*wa man aṣdaqu*
than Allāh in telling? (4:122)	*mina 'llāhi qīlā*

the Ever-Living, the Everlasting,	*al-Ḥayyu 'l-Bāqī*
He who will never die.	*lā yamūtu abadā*
The Lord of Majesty and Honor,	*Dhu'l-jalāli wa 'l-ikrām*
and of the Splendid Names,	*wa 'l-asmā'i 'l-'iẓām*
and of the Prodigious Blessings.	*wa 'l-minan al-jisām*
The noble Messengers	*wa ballaghati 'r-rusulu 'l-*
have also been sent	*kirām*
with the truth.	*bi'l-ḥaqq*
May Allāh bless our Chief,	*ṣalla 'llāhu 'alā sayyidi-nā*
Muhammad, and give him peace,	*Muḥammadin wa sallam*
and peace be upon them all!	*wa 'alai-himu 's-salām*
And we, with respect to what Allāh,	*wa naḥnu 'alā mā qāla 'llāhu*
our Lord,	*Rabbu-nā*
and [Muhammad] our Chief	*wa Sayyidu-nā*
and our Master,	*wa Mawlā-nā*
have said, we are among	*mina 'sh-*
the witnesses,	*shāhidīn:*
and whatever duties	*wa mā*
they have enjoined	*awjaba*
and have made incumbent	*wa alzama*
[upon us], we do not deny	*ghairu jāḥidīn:*
[our obligation to fulfill them].	
And praise be to Allāh,	*wa 'l-ḥamdu li'llāhi*
the Lord of All the Worlds,	*Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn:*
and His blessings be upon our Chief,	*wa ṣalawātu-hu 'alā sayyidi-nā*
Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets,	*Muḥammadin khātami 'n-nabiyyīn:*
and upon his venerated forefathers,	*wa 'alā abawai-hi 'l-mukarramaini*
Adam, our Chieftain, and	*sayyidi-nā Ādama*
Abraham, the Bosom Friend	*wa 'l-Khalīli Ibrāhīm:*
[of Allāh],	
and upon all his brethren	*wa 'alā jamī'i ikhwāni-hi*
meaning his fellow Prophets,	*mina 'n-nabiyyīn:*
and upon the pure members	*wa 'alā ahli*
of his household,	*baiti-hi 't-ṭāhirīn*
and upon his chosen Companions,	*wa 'alā aṣḥābi-hi 'l-muntakhabīn:*
and upon his pure wives,	*wa 'alā azwāji-hi 't-ṭāhirāti*
the Mothers of the Believers,	*ummahāti 'l-mu'minīn*
and upon those	*wa 'ala 't-*
who follow their example	*tābi'īna la-hum*
in active goodness	*bi-iḥsānin*
until the Day of Judgment,	*ilā yawmi 'd-dīn*
through Your Mercy,	*'alai-nā ma'a-hum bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*
Allāh has told the truth, He who is	*ṣadaqa 'llāhu*
the Lord of Majesty and Honor,	*Dhu'l-jalāli wa 'l-ikrām:*

of Splendid Might	*wa 'l-'aẓamati*
and Sovereign Power;	*wa 's-sulṭān:*
He who is All-Compelling,	*Jabbārun*
and cannot be repulsed;	*lā yurām:*
He who is Omnipotent,	*'Azīzun*
and cannot be deterred;	*lā yuḍām:*
He who is Eternally Self-Sustaining,	*Qayyūmun*
and never sleeps.	*lā yanām:*
His are the noble acts,	*la-hu 'l-af'ālu 'l-kirām:*
and the splendid gifts,	*wa 'l-mawāhibu 'l-'iẓām:*
and the enormous benefits,	*wa 'l-ayādī 'l-jisām*
and the gracious favors and blessings,	*wa 'l-afḍālu wa 'l-in'ām*
and perfection and completeness.	*wa 'l-kamālu wa 't-tamām*
The noble angels	*tusabbiḥu la-hu 'l-malā'ikatu 'l-*
proclaim His glory,	*kirām:*
as do the animals and the reptiles,	*wa 'l-bahā'imu wa 'l-hawāmm:*
and the winds and the clouds,	*wa 'r-riyāḥu wa 'l-ghamām:*
and the light and the darkness.	*wa 'ḍ-ḍiyā'u wa 'ẓ-ẓalām.*
He is Allāh, the King,	*wa Huwa 'llāhu 'l-Maliku 'l-*
the Holy One,	*Quddūsu 's-*
the Source of Peace.[525]	*Salām.*

And we bear witness	*wa naḥnu 'alā*
to that which Allāh,	*mā qāla 'llāhu*
our Lord, has said.	*Rabbu-nā*
(Glorious be His praise,	*jalla thanā'u-h:*
and sanctified be His Names.)	*wa taqaddasat asmā'u-h:*
His blessings have become manifest,	*wa jalat ālā'u-h:*
and His earth and His heaven	*wa shahidat arḍu-hu*
have also borne witness,	*wa samā'u-h:*
and His Messengers	*wa naṭaqat*
have pronounced it,	*bi-hi rusulu-hu*
and His Prophets	*wa anbiyā'u-hu*
have been witnesses.	*shāhidūn:*

Allāh bears witness that	*shahida 'llāhu anna-hu*
there is no god but He—and [so do]	*lā ilāha illā Huwa*
the angels and the men of learning—	*wa 'l-malā'ikatu wa ulu 'l-'ilmi*
upholding justice.	*qā'iman bi'l-qisṭ:*
There is no god but He,	*lā ilāha illā Huwa 'l-*
the Omnipotent, the All-Wise.	*'Azīzu 'l-Ḥakīm.*
(3:18)	

The true religion	*inna 'd-dīna*
in the sight of Allāh is surrender	*'inda 'llāhi 'l-Islām.*
[to His will and guidance]. (3:19)	

And as for us, to that which Allāh,	*wa naḥnu bi-mā shahida 'llāhu*
our Lord, has testified,	*Rabbu-nā*

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[525] This is a partial quotation of Q. 59:23.

as have the angels	*wa 'l-malā'ikatu*
and the men of learning	*wa ulu 'l-'ilmi*
among His creatures,	*min khalqi-hi*
we too are among those	*minna 'sh-*
who bear witness.	*shāhidīn*
This is a testimony	*shahādatun*
by which one bears witness	*shahida*
to the Omnipotent,	*bi-ha 'l-'Azīzu 'l-*
the Praiseworthy,	*Hamīd*
and by which the believer	*wa dāna*
professes obedience	*bi-ha 'l-mu'minu 'l-*
to the All-Forgiving,	*Ghafūra 'l-*
the Ever-Loving,[526]	*Wadūd*
and he dedicates the testimony	*wa akhlasa bi'sh-shahādati*
to the Lord of the Throne,	*li-Dhi 'l-'arshi 'l-*
the All-Glorious,[527]	*Majīd*
who will honor it with acceptance,	*yarfa'u-hā*
as He accepts righteous	*bi'l-'amali 's-sālihi 'r-*
and rightly guided work.[528]	*rashīd:*
To one who utters it	*yu'tā qā'ilu-ha 'l-*
eternal life will be granted,	*khulūd:*
in Gardens	*fī jannāti*
endowed with thornless lote-trees,	*dhāti sidrin makhdūd:*
and clustered acacias,	*wa talhin mandūd:*
and spreading shade,	*wa ẓillin mamdūd:*
and gushing water.[529]	*wa mā'in maskūb:*
Therein he will keep company	*yurāfiqu*
with the witness-bearing Prophets,	*fī-ha 'n-nabiyyīna 'sh-shuhūd:*
and those who bow	*wa 'r-rukka'u 's-*
and prostrate themselves,	*sujūd*
and those who exert the utmost effort	*wa 'l-bādhilīna fī tā'ati-hi*
in paying obedience to Him.	*ghāyata 'l-majhūd.*
O Allāh, grant that we may be	*Allāhumma 'j'al-nā*
truthful in this affirmation	*bi-hādha 't-tasdīqi*
of the truth,	*sādiqīn*
and witnesses to this truthfulness,	*wa bi-hādha 's-sidqi shāhidīn:*
and faithful believers	*wa bi-hādhihi 'sh-shahādati*
in this testimony,	*mu'minīn*
and professors of Unity in this faith,	*wa bi-hādha 'l-īmāni muwahhidīn:*
and sincere	*wa bi-hādha 't-*
in this profession of Unity,	*tawhīdi mukhlisīn:*
and certain in this sincerity,	*wa bi-hādha 'l-ikhlāsi mūqinīn:*

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[526] Allāh (Exalted is He) has so described Himself in Q. 85:14.

[527] Allāh (Exalted is He) has so described Himself in Q. 85:15.

[528] This is an allusion to Q. 35:10.

[529] This sentence includes a partial quotation of Q. 56:27–33.

and consciously aware	*wa bi-hādha 'l-*
of this certitude,	*yaqīni 'ārifīn*
and ready to acknowledge	*wa bi-hādhihi 'l-*
this awareness,	*ma'rifa mu'tarifīn*
and penitent	*wa bi-hādha 'l-*
through this acknowledgment,	*i'tirāfi munībīn*
and successful	*wa bi-hādhihi 'l-*
because of this repentance.	*ināba fā'izīn:*
May we be eager	*wa fī-mā*
for that which is close to You,	*ladai-ka rāghibīn:*
and seekers	*wa li-mā*
of that which is in Your presence.	*'inda-ka ṭālibīn:*
May You justly vaunt our worth	*wa bāhi*
to the noble	*bi-na 'l-malā'ikata 'l-*
recording angels.[530]	*kirāma 'l-kātibīn:*
Resurrect us in the company of	*wa 'ḥshur-nā*
the Prophets	*ma'a 'n-nabiyyīna*
and the champions of truth,	*wa 'ṣ-ṣiddīqīn:*
and the martyrs	*wa 'sh-shuhadā'i 'ṣ-*
and the righteous.[531]	*ṣāliḥīn:*
Let us not be included	*wa lā taj'al-nā*
among those	*min-mani*
whom the devils seduce,	*'stahwat-hu 'sh-shayāṭīn:*
distracting them	*fa-shaghalat-hu*
from their religious duty,	*'ani 'd-dīn:*
so that they come to be	*fa-aṣbaḥa*
among the remorseful,	*mina 'n-nādimīn:*
and in the Hereafter	*wa fi 'l-ākhirati*
among the losers.	*mina 'l-khāsirīn:*
Grant us eternal life	*wa awjib la-na 'l-khulūda*
in the Gardens of bliss,	*fī jannāti 'n-na'īm:*
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*
O Allāh, to You be the praise,	*Allāhumma la-ka 'l-ḥamd*
for Worthy of praise are You,	*wa Anta li'l-ḥamdi Ahl*
and You are the One	*wa Anta 'l-*
who is truly Deserving	*Ḥaqīqu*
of gracious recognition	*bi'l-minnati*
and more credit yet.	*thumma 'l-faḍl:*
To You be the praise	*la-ka 'l-ḥamdu*
for the uninterrupted flow	*'alā tatābu'i*
of Your beneficence.	*iḥsāni-k:*
To You be the praise	*wa la-ka 'l-ḥamdu*
for the endless recurrence	*'alā tawāturi*

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[530] This is an allusion to Q. 82:10–12.

[531] This is an allusion to Q. 4:69.

of Your benefaction.	*ni'ami-k*
To You be the praise	*wa la-ka 'l-ḥamdu*
for the constant stream	*'alā tarādufi*
of Your benevolence.	*'minani-k*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
You instilled affection for us in the	*inna-ka 'aṭafta 'alai-nā*
hearts of our fathers and mothers,	*qulūba 'l-ābā'i wa 'l-ummahāti*
when we were little children,	*ṣighārā*
and You have multiplied	*wa ḍā'afta*
Your favors to us,	*'alai-nā ni'ama-ka*
since we became adults.	*kibārā*
You have conferred	*wa wālaita*
Your kindness upon us	*'alai-nā birra-ka*
in copious abundance.	*midrārā*
You have not been quick	*wa jahilnā*
to punish us,	*wa mā*
although we have often	*'ajilta-nā*
acted foolishly.	*mirārā*
To You the praise is therefore due,	*fa-la-ka 'l-ḥamdu*
O Allāh,	*'llāhumma.*
so we praise You in private	*fa-innā naḥmadu-ka*
and in public too,	*sirran wa jihārā:*
and we thank You lovingly	*wa nashkuru-ka maḥabbatan*
and of our own free will.	*wa 'khtiyārā:*
Of course the praise is due to You,	*fa-la-ka 'l-ḥamdu*
since You inspired us	*idh alhamta-nā*
to request forgiveness for our sin.	*mina 'l-khaṭa'i 'stighfārā:*
To You belongs the praise,	*wa la-ka 'l-ḥamdu*
so bestow upon us a Garden	*fa-'rzuq-nā jannatan*
[of Paradise]	
and screen from us a Fire [of Hell].	*wa 'ḥjub 'an-nā nārā:*
Do not destroy us	*wa lā tuhlik-nā*
on the Day of Resurrection,	*yauma 'l-ba'thi*
thereby putting us to shame	*fa-taj'al-nā*
among the folk assembled.	*baina 'l-ma'āshiri 'ārā.*
Do not disgrace us	*wa lā tafḍaḥ-nā*
by exposing our bad deeds,	*bi-sū'i af'āli-nā*
on the Day of our meeting with You,	*yauma liqā'i-ka*
thereby leaving us nothing to wear	*fa-taksu-nā*
but degradation and dejection.	*dhillatan wa 'nkisārā*
[Grant these requests]	
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*
O Allāh, to You be the praise,	*Allāhumma la-ka 'l-ḥamd*
as You have guided us unto Islām,	*ka-mā hadaita-nā li'l-Islām.*
and given us wisdom	*wa a'ṭaita-nā 'l-ḥikmata*
and the Qur'ān.	*wa 'l-Qur'ān:*

O Allāh, You taught us [the Qurʾān]	*Allāhumma Anta ʿallamta-nā*
before we felt any interest	*qabla raghbati-nā*
in its teaching.	*fī taʿlīmi-h:*
You bestowed its grace upon us,	*wa mananta bi-hi ʿalai-nā*
before we learned	*qabla ʿalimnā*
how to understand it,	*bi-maʿrifati-h:*
and You singled us out to receive it,	*wa khaṣaṣta-nā bi-hi*
before we had any understanding	*qabla maʿrifati-nā*
of its merit.	*bi-faḍli-h*

O Allāh, since this has been	*Allāhumma fa-idhā kāna dhālika*
a kindness to us,	*min faḍli-ka*
from Your bountiful grace,	*luṭfan bi-nā*
and a favor conferred upon us,	*wa ʾmtinānan ʿalai-nā min ghairi*
without scheming or effort	*ḥīlati-nā*
on our part,	*wa lā quwwati-nā:*
grant us now, O Allāh,	*fa-hab la-nā ʾllāhumma*
the proper observance of its Truth,[532]	*riʿāyata ḥaqqi-h:*
and the preservation of its Verses,	*wa ḥifẓa āyāti-h:*
and conduct in accordance with	*wa ʿamalan*
its unequivocal precepts,	*bi-muḥkami-h:*
and faith in its ambiguous passages,	*wa īmānan bi-mutashābihi-h:*
and right guidance in the	*wa hudan*
contemplation of its meaning,[533]	*fī tadabburi-h:*
and reflection on its parables	*wa tafakkuran fī amthāli-hi*
and its miraculous character,	*wa maʿjizati-h:*
and insight	*wa tabṣiratan*
into its illumination	*fī nūri-hi*
and its legislation.	*wa ḥukmi-h:*
Let us not be assailed by doubts	*lā taʿriḍ-na ʾsh-shukūku*
concerning its credibility,	*fī taṣdīqi-h:*
and let no deviation	*wa lā yakhtalij-na ʾz-*
cause us to waver	*zaighu*
in the pursuit of its path.	*fī qaṣdi ṭarīqi-h.*

O Allāh, enable us to benefit	*Allāhumma ʾnfaʿ-nā*
by the Mighty Qurʾān,	*bi-ʾl-Qurʾāni ʾl-ʿaẓīm:*
and let us find blessings in the signs	*wa bārik la-nā fi ʾl-āyāti*
and the wise remembrance	*wa ʾdh-dhikri ʾl-ḥakīm:*
[it contains].[534]	
Accept [our supplication] from us,	*wa taqabbal min-nā*
for You are indeed	*inna-ka*
the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing,	*Anta ʾs-Samīʿu ʾl-ʿAlīm*
and relent toward us,	*wa tub ʿalai-nā*

[532] This phrase alludes to an expression used by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) in Q. 57:27.

[533] This is an allusion to Q. 4:82 and 23:68.

[534] This is an allusion to Q. 3:58.

for You are indeed	*inna-ka*
the Ever-Relenting,	*Anta 't-Tauwābu 'r-*
the All-Compassionate.	*Raḥīm*
[Grant our requests]	
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*
O Allāh, let the Qur'ān be	*Allāhumma 'j'ali 'l-Qur'āna*
the springtime of our hearts,	*rabī'a qulūbi-nā:*
and the healing of our breasts,	*wa shifā'a ṣudūri-nā*
and the removal of our sorrows,	*wa jilā'a aḥzāni-nā*
and the departure of our worries	*wa dhahāba humūmi-nā*
and our anxieties.	*wa ghumūmi-nā*
[Let it be] our driver and our leader,	*wa sā'iqa-nā wa qā'ida-nā*
and our guide	*wa dalīla-nā*
to You and to Your Gardens	*ilai-ka wa ilā jannāti-ka*
the Gardens of bliss,	*jannāti 'n-na'īm.*
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*
O Allāh, let the Qur'ān be	*Allāhumma 'j'ali 'l-Qur'āna*
for our hearts an illumination,	*li-qulūbi-nā ḍiyā':*
for our eyes a clarification,	*wa li-abṣāri-nā jilā':*
for our sicknesses a medication,	*wa li-asqāmi-nā dawā':*
for our sins a purification,	*wa li-dhunūbi-nā mumaḥḥiṣā:*
and from the Fire [of Hell]	*wa mina 'n-nāri*
a means of salvation.	*mukhalliṣā.*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma 'ksu-nā*
cause it to dress us in fine clothes,	*bi-hi 'l-ḥulal:*
and to settle us on couches	*wa askin-nā*
in the shade.	*bi-hi 'ẓ-ẓulal:*
Use it in order to shower	*wa asbigh 'alai-nā*
blessings upon us,	*bi-hi 'n-ni'am*
and to drive misfortunes	*wa 'dfa' bi-hi*
away from us.	*'an-nā 'n-niqam:*
Let it enable us,	*wa 'j'al-nā*
when recompense is due,	*bi-hi 'inda 'l-jazā'i*
to be among those	*mina 'l-*
who are successful,	*fā'izīn*
when gracious favor is bestowed,	*wa 'inda 'n-na'mā'i*
to be among those who are grateful,	*mina 'sh-shākirīn*
and in the face of trial	*wa 'inda 'l-*
and tribulation,	*balā'i*
to be among those	*mina 's-*
who patiently endure.	*ṣābirīn*
Let us not be included among	*wa lā taj'al-nā*
those whom the devils seduce,	*mim-mani 'stahwat-hu 'sh-shayāṭīn:*
by using this world to tempt them	*fa-shaghalat-hu bi 'd-dunyā*

away from religious duty,	*'ani 'd-dīn:*
so that they come to be	*fa-aṣbaḥū*
among the losers.	*mina 'l-khāsirīn:*
[Grant our requests]	
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*

O Allāh, do not let	*Allāhumma lā taj'ali 'l-*
the Qur'ān be unfruitful,	*Qur'āna māḥilā:*
and do not let the road	*wa la 'ṣ-ṣirāṭa*
lead us nowhere.	*bi-nā zā'ilā:*
Do not cause our Prophet, our Chief	*wa lā nabiyya-nā wa sayyida-nā*
and our Mainstay, Muhammad,	*wa sanada-nā Muḥammadan*
(Allāh bless him and give him peace)	*(ṣalla 'llāhu 'alai-hi wa sallam)*
to disown us at the Resurrection,	*fi 'l-qiyāmati 'an-nā*
and let him not turn	*mu'riḍan*
his back upon us.	*wa lā muwalliyā:*
Let him rather be,	*ij'al-hu*
O our Lord and our Creator,	*yā Rabba-nā Khāliqa-nā*
O our Sustainer,	*yā Rāziqa-nā*
an intercessor who has been	*la-nā shāfi'an*
empowered to intercede on our behalf.	*mushaffa'ā.*
Bring us to his Basin, and use his cup	*wa awrid-nā ḥauḍa-hu wa 'sqi-nā*
to offer us a drink	*bi-ka'si-hi*
that is so thirst-quenching,	*mashraban rawiyyā:*
so palatable and salubrious,	*sā'ighan*
that we shall never	*hanīyyā:*
be thirsty again after having drunk it.[535]	*lā naẓma'u ba'da-hu abadā:*
Let us be neither shameful	*ghaira khazāyā*
nor disloyal,	*wa lā nākithīn:*
not guilty of denial	*wa lā jāḥidīn:*
not having earned Your wrath,	*wa lā maghḍūbin 'alai-nā*
and not having gone astray.[536]	*wa lā ḍāllīn:*
[Grant our requests]	
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*

O Allāh, enable us to benefit	*Allāhumma 'nfa'-nā*
by the Qur'ān,	*bi'l-Qur'āni 'lladhī*
the status of which	*rafa'ta*
You have exalted,	*makāna-h:*
the principles of which	*wa thabbatta*
You have established,	*arkāna-h:*
the authority of which	*wa ayyadta*
You have confirmed,	*sulṭāna-h:*
the blessings of which	*wa bayyanta*
You have explained,	*barakāta-hu*

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[535] See Vol.1, pp. 237–38.

[536] This is an allusion to the words of Allāh (Exalted is He) in the Opening Sūra [*Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*] of the Qur'ān.

the language of which	*wa ja'alta'l-lughata 'l-*
You have caused to be	*'arabiyyata 'l-*
the eloquent Arabic tongue.[537]	*faṣīḥata lisāna-h*
and [concerning which]	*wa*
You have said,	*qulta*
O Most Excellent of sayers	*yā 'azza*
(Glory be to Him):	*min qā'ilin subḥāna-h:*

So, when We recite it,	*fa-idhā qara'nāhu*
follow its recitation.	*fa-'ttabi' qur'ānah*
Then upon Us	*thumma inna*
rests the task of explaining it.	*'alai-nā bayāna-h.*
(75:18,19)	

It is the best	*wa huwa aḥsanu*
of Your Books in arrangement,	*Kutubi-ka niẓāmā*
the most lucid of them in speech,	*wa afṣaḥu-hā kalāmā:*
and the clearest of them in stating	*wa abyanu-hā*
what is lawful and unlawful.	*ḥalālan wa ḥarāmā:*
It is precise in explanation,	*muḥkamu 'l-bayān:*
manifest in demonstration,	*ẓāhiru 'l-burhān:*
securely protected from excess	*maḥrūsun mina 'z-ziyādati*
and insufficiency.	*wa 'n-nuqṣān:*

In it there is a promise and a threat,[538]	*fī-hi wa'dun wa wa'īd:*
an intimidation and a menace.	*wa takhwīfun wa tahdīd:*

Falsehood cannot come at it	*lā ya'tī-hi 'l-bāṭilu min*
from before it or behind it.	*baini yadai-hi wa lā min khalfi-h:*
[It is] a revelation	*tanzīlun*
from One who is All-Wise,	*min Ḥakīmin*
All-Praiseworthy. (41:42)	*Ḥamīd.*

O Allāh, oblige us therefore	*Allāhumma fa-awjib la-nā*
to hold it in even greater honor.	*bi-hi 'sh-sharafa 'l-mazīd:*
Enroll us in	*wa alḥiq-nā*
every auspicious act of piety,	*bi-kulli birrin sa'īd:*
and keep us employed	*wa 'sta'mil-nā*
in righteous and rightly guided work.	*fi 'l-'amali 'ṣ-ṣāliḥi 'r-rashīd:*
You are indeed the Ever-Near,	*inna-ka Anta 'l-Qarību 'l-*
the Responsive.	*Mujīb:*
[Grant our requests]	
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*

O Allāh, as You have caused us to be	*Allāhumma fa-ka-mā ja'alta-nā*
believers in it [the Qur'ān],	*bi-hi muṣaddiqīn:*
and verifiers	*wa li-mā*
of that which it contains,	*fī-hi muḥaqqiqīn:*

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[537] Allāh (Exalted is He) has stated this emphatically in Q. 26:192-195.

[538] That is to say, the promise of blissful reward in the Garden of Paradise, and the threat of terrible torment in the Fire of Hell.

> Allāh (Exalted is He) will then say: "That is how I saw fit to treat you. When you were in private situations, you would brazenly affront Me with heinous sins *[‘azā’im]*, but when you met with other people, you would approach them modestly and humbly. By making a show of your deeds, you would give people an impression contrary to what was hidden away in your hearts. You were in awe of other people, but you did not regard Me with awe. You honored other people, but you did not honor Me. You abstained, to please other people, from things you did not abandon for My sake. Today, therefore, I am giving you a taste of My painful chastisement, combined with a glimpse of My abundant reward, of which you have been deprived."

As reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When Allāh (Exalted is He) created the Garden of Eden *[Jannat ‘Adn]*, He created within it that which no eye has ever seen, of which no ear has ever heard, and the very notion of which has never occurred to the human heart. Then He said to it: "Speak to Me," and it responded by saying three times:

Successful indeed	*qad aflaha ’l-*
are the true believers. (23:1)	*mu’minūn.*

> Then the Garden went on to say: "I am forbidden *[harām]* to every miser *[bakhīl]* and ostentatious hypocrite *[murā’ī]*."

A man once asked Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace): "In what does salvation reside, tomorrow [at the Resurrection]?" He replied:

> You must not try to deceive Allāh (Exalted is He).

The man then asked: "How could I be guilty of trying to deceive Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)?" The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) explained:

> By doing what He has commanded you to do, but doing it for some purpose other than to obtain the gracious favor of Allāh (Exalted is He).

All of you must therefore beware of hypocritical display *[riyā’]*, for it is tantamount to associating partners *[shirk]* with Allāh (Exalted is He). Indeed, on the Day of Resurrection *[Yaum al-Qiyāma]*, the ostentatious hypocrite *[murā’ī]* will be summoned by four names, over the heads of all the assembled creatures: "O unbeliever *[yā kāfir]*! O shameless liar *[yā fājir]*! O traitor *[yā ghādir]*! O loser *[yā khāsir]*! Your work has gone astray, and your recompense has been canceled, so there is no share for you here today. Apply for your wages to those for whom you used to

2.

Traditional reports concerning the special value of fasting during the "white" days *[al-ayyām al-bīḍ]*.[512]

Shaikh Abū Nasr [Muhammad ibn al-Bannā'] has informed us, on good traditional authority,[513] that the following saying can be traced back to ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

"To fast on the thirteenth day of the month is equivalent in value to fasting for three thousand years.

"To fast on the fourteenth day of the month is equivalent in value to fasting for ten thousand years.

"To fast on the fifteenth day of the month is equivalent in value to fasting for one hundred and thirteen thousand years."

According to a traditional report transmitted by Abū Isḥāq, on the authority of Jarīr (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> To fast on three days out of every month, namely, the thirteenth and the fourteenth and the fifteenth, is equivalent to fasting all year long *[siyām ad-dahr]*.[514]

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of

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[512] See note 499 on p. 351 above.

[513] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report. His own father [Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā']—Hilāl ibn Muhammad—an-Naqqāsh—al-Ḥusain ibn Sufyān—Sulaimān ibn Yazīd, the client [mawlā] of the tribe of Banī Hāshim—ʿAlī ibn Yazīd—ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Hārūn [ibn ʿAntara]—Saʿīd ibn ʿUthmān—ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[514] According to several traditional reports, the actual practice of fasting all year long *[siyām ad-dahr]* was not encouraged by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), "lest a man should come to believe that this kind of fasting has been ordained by Allāh (Exalted is He), or, through physical incapacity, should become insincere, or because, by fasting all the days of the year, he would do so even on the days when fasting is strictly forbidden." (See: E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *ʿ–W–L*.)

Recompense them with goodness	*wa 'jzi-him*
for the good they have done,	*bi'l-iḥsāni iḥsānā*
and with forgiveness	*wa bi's-sayyi'āti*
for their bad deeds,	*ghufrānā*
and treat us with compassion,	*wa 'rḥam-nā*
when we come to be	*idhā ṣirnā*
in the state to which they have come,	*ilā mā ṣārū ilai-h*
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*
O Allāh, O Provider of nourishment,	*Allāhumma yā Sā'iqa 'l-qūt*
O Hearer of the sound of the voice,	*yā Sāmi'a 'ṣ-ṣawt*
O Clother of the bones after death,	*yā Kāsi 'l-'iẓāmi ba'da 'l-mawt.*
bless Muḥammad	*ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin*
and the family of Muḥammad.	*wa 'alā āli Muḥammad*
Do not leave us, on this noble	*wa lā tada' la-nā fī hādhihi 'l-*
and blessed night of ours,	*lailati 'sh-sharīfati 'l-mubārakati*
with any sin	*dhanban*
that You have not forgiven,	*illā ghafarta-h:*
nor with any care	*wa lā hamman*
that You have not dispelled,	*illā farrajta-h:*
nor with any worry	*wa lā karban*
that You have not relieved,	*illā naffasta-h:*
nor with any grief	*wa lā ghamman*
that You have not removed,	*illā kashafta-h:*
nor with any misfortune	*wa lā sū'an*
that You have not banished,	*illā ṣarafta-h:*
nor with any sick person	*wa lā marīḍan*
whom You have not cured,	*illā shafaita-h:*
nor with any suffering individual	*wa lā mubtalan*
whose well-being	*illā*
You have not restored,	*'āfaita-h:*
nor with anyone guilty	*wa lā dhā*
of some misconduct	*isā'atin*
whom You have not pardoned,	*illā aqalta-h*
nor with any overdue entitlement	*wa lā ḥaqqan*
that You have not extracted,	*illā 'stakhrajta-h*
nor with any missing person	*wa lā ghā'iban*
whom You have not brought home,	*illā radadta-h*
nor with any rebellious sinner	*wa lā 'āṣiyan*
whom You have not guided aright,	*illā hadaita-h*
nor with any child	*wa lā waladan*
whom You have not	*illā*
made fit and strong,	*jabarta-h*
nor with anyone deceased	*wa lā mayyitan*
whom You have not	*illā*
treated mercifully,	*raḥimta-h*
nor with any need,	*wa lā ḥājatan*

Imām Mālik ibn Anas (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) also said: "It has come to my attention that Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib[243] once said: 'If someone is present at the late evening prayer *[salāt al-ʿishā']* on the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*, he will derive good fortune therefrom.'

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> If someone performs both the late evening *[ʿishā']* and sunset *[maghrib]* prayers in congregation, he will obtain his share of good fortune from the Night of Power *[Lailat al-Qadr]*. Moreover, if he recites it—meaning the Sūra of Power *[Sūrat al-Qadr]*—it will be as if he had recited one fourth of the entire Qurʾān.[244]

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[243] Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib [or, al-Musayyab] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was an early scholar of Prophetic tradition. He died in A.H. 93. (There is some uncertainty as to the correct spelling of his last name. The forms *ibn al-Musayyib* and *ibn al-Musayyab* both occur, often in the same text.)

[244] **Author's note:** It is a recommended practice for the worshipper to recite the Sūra of Power *[Sūrat al-Qadr]* in the final late evening prayer *[ʿishā']* of the month of Ramaḍān.

the moon of the place of rest,	*wa qamari 'l-mihād:*
the beauty of the roses,	*wa zaini 'l-wirād:*
and the intercessor	*wa shafī'i 'l-*
on behalf of sinners	*mudhnibīna*
on the Day of Summoning.[140]	*yawma 't-Tanād*

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,	*Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin*
and his offspring	*wa dhurriyyati-hi*
and all his Companions,	*wa jamī'i ṣaḥābati-h*
who came to his support,	*alladhīna qāmū bi-nuṣrati-h*
and followed his exemplary practice,	*wa jarau bi-sunnati-h*
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,	*Allāhumma ṣalli*
whom You sent	*'alā Muḥammadini 'lladhī*
with the Truth,	*bi'l-ḥaqqi ba'athta-h:*
and to whom You attributed veracity,	*wa bi'ṣ-ṣidqi na'atta-h:*
and whom You made remarkable	*wa bi'l-ḥilmi*
for tolerance,	*wasamta-h:*
and to whom You gave	*wa bi-Aḥmada*
the name Aḥmad,	*sammaita-h:*
and whom You have empowered	*wa fi 'l-*
to intercede for his Community	*qiyāmati fī ummati-hi*
at the Resurrection.	*shaffa'ta-h.*

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,	*Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin*
as long as the stars shine bright,	*mā azharati 'n-nujūm:*
and bless Muḥammad,	*wa ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin*
as long as the clouds accumulate,	*mā talāḥamati 'l-ghuyūm:*
and bless Muḥammad,	*wa ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin*
O Ever-Living,	*yā Ḥayyu*
O Eternally Self-Sustaining One!	*yā Qayyūm.*

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,	*Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin*
as long as the righteous remember him,	*mā dhakara-hu 'l-abrār:*
and bless Muḥammad	*wa ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin*
as long the night	*ma 'khtalafa 'l-lailu*
and the day take turns,	*wa 'n-nahār:*
and bless Muḥammad	*wa ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin*
and the Emigrés and the Helpers,	*wa 'alā 'l-Muhājirīna wa 'l-Anṣār:*
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*

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[140] The Day of Resurrection is thus referred to in Q. 40:32,33.

The exhortation *[al-waṣiyya]*

You must realize—may Allāh	*i'lamū—*
bestow His mercy upon you all—	*raḥima-kumu 'llāh—*
that this night of yours	*anna lailata-kum hādhihi*
is the night of bidding farewell	*lailatu 'l-wadā'i*
to your month,	*li-shahri-kumu*
which Allāh has ennobled,	*'lladhī sharrafa-hu 'llāhu*
which He has glorified,	*wa 'aẓẓama-h:*
the value of which He has exalted,	*wa rafa'a qadra-hu*
and which He has honored	*wa karrama-h:*
with fasting [by day] and vigil	*bi-'ṣ-ṣiyāmi wa 'l-qiyām:*
[by night],	
and the recitation of the Qur'ān,	*wa tilāwati 'l-Qur'ān:*
and the coming down to you	*wa nuzūli 'r-raḥmati*
therein of mercy	*fī-hi 'alai-kum*
and approval from Allāh.	*mina 'llāhi wa 'r-riḍwān:*
Allāh has made it the lamp	*ja'ala-hu 'llāhu*
of the common folk,	*miṣbāḥa 'l-'āmm:*
and the means of establishing	*wa wāsiṭata 'n-*
good order,	*niẓām:*
and the glory of the principles of Islām,	*wa sharafa qawā'idi 'l-Islām:*
which are resplendent with	*al-mushriqati*
the lights of fasting and vigil.	*bi-anwāri 'ṣ-ṣiyāmi wa 'l-qiyām:*
Allāh (Exalted is He) sent down	*anzala 'llāhu—ta'ālā—*
His Book therein	*fī-hi Kitāba-h*
[in the month of Ramaḍān],	
and in it He has opened	*wa fataḥa fī-hi*
His gates to the penitent.	*li't-tā'ibīna abwāba-h.*
In it no prayer of supplication	*fa-lā du'ā'a fī-hi*
is offered without being heard,	*illā masmū':*
no benefit is left	*wa lā khaira*
without being gathered,	*illā majmū':*
no damage threatens	*wa lā ḍarra*
without being repulsed,	*illā madfū':*
and no good deed is done	*wa lā 'amala*
without being honorably accepted.	*illā marfū':*
Fortunate and successful is he	*aẓ-ẓāfiru 'l-maimūnu*

who takes advantage	*mani 'ghtanama*
of its opportunities,	*furṣata-h*
and a loser who misses a bargain	*wa 'l-khāsiru 'l-maghbūnu*
is he who neglects it and lets it slip by.	*man ahmala-hu fa-fāta-h*
It is a month which Allāh	*shahrun*
has caused to be	*ja'ala-hu 'llāhu*
a means of purification for your sins,	*li-dhunūbi-kum taṭhīrā.*
and a means of atonement	*wa li-sayyi'āti-kum*
for your misdeeds.	*takfīrā*
For those of you	*wa li-man*
who are well-behaved	*aḥsana*
in its company,	*min-kum ṣuḥbata-hu*
[He has caused it to be]	
a treasure and a radiant light,	*dhakhīratan wa nūrā.*
and, for those who fulfill	*wa li-man*
its requirements	*wafā bi-sharṭi-hi*
and observe it correctly,	*wa qāma bi-ḥaqqi-hi*
a joyful and happy experience.	*faraḥan wa surūrā.*
It is a month in which pious restraint	*shahrun tawarra'a fī-hi*
is practiced even by people addicted	*ahlu 'l-fisqi*
to corrupt behavior	*wa 'l-fasād:*
and immoral conduct,	*wa zāda*
while the longing for Allāh	*fī-hi mina 'r-raghbati*
is more intensely	*ila 'llāhi*
felt by earnest and dedicated people.	*ahlu 'l-jiddi wa 'l-ijtihād:*
It is the month	*shahru*
for the reconstruction of hearts	*'imārati 'l-qulūb:*
and the expiation of sins,	*wa kaffārati 'dh-dhunūb:*
for paying special attention	*wa 'khtiṣāṣi 'l-*
to the mosques,	*masājid:*
by keeping them crowded	*bi'l-izdiḥāmi*
and crammed,	*wa 't-taḥāshud:*
and for the reduction of slaveholdings,	*wa hubūṭi 'l-amlāk:*
through contracts of emancipation	*bi-ṣukūki 'l-'itqi*
and manumission.	*wa 'l-fikāk.*
It is a month in which the mosques	*shahrun fī-hi 'l-masājidu*
are frequented,	*tu'mar*
and the lamps are made to shine,	*wa 'l-maṣābīḥu tuzhar*
and the verses	*wa 'l-āyātu*
[of the Qur'ān] are recited,	*tudhkar*
and hearts are mended,	*wa 'l-qulūbu tujbar*
and sins are forgiven.	*wa 'dh-dhunūbu tughfar*
It is a month in which the mosques	*shahrun fī-hi tushriqu 'l-masājidu*
are bright with radiant lights,	*bi'l-anwār*
and the angels make many pleas	*wa tukthiru 'l-*

That could be the time it takes to perform four cycles of prayer [*rakaʿāt*], or it may only be enough for two cycles [*rakʿatain*].

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Two cycles of ritual prayer [*rakʿatain*], performed by the servant [of the Lord] in the middle of the night, are better than this world and all that it contains. But for the hardship it would have caused my Community [*Ummatī*], I would have made them obligatory.

All of this was intended to make it easy for his Community [*Umma*] to keep night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*] and to practice worshipful service [*ʿibāda*]. He did not wish it to be burdensome for them, and for worshipful service to be unpleasant for them, so that they would become weary and bored. Far from it! He simply steered them (Allāh bless him and give him peace) toward the keeping of night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], by mentioning its excellent merit and its spiritual reward, so that they would not confine themselves exclusively to the obligatory religious duties [*farāʾiḍ*] and established customary practices [*sunan*].[57]

For the keeping of vigil, one third is the fraction of the night that is most strongly recommended, while the least recommended is one sixth. This is because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never once kept vigil throughout the whole of a night until morning. He would always take some sleep in the course of it. Nor did he ever sleep throughout the whole of a night until morning. He would always keep vigil during some part of it, as we have explained.

It has been said that the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] of the first part of the night is for those who observe *tahajjud*;[58] the vigil [*qiyām*] kept in the middle part of it is for the humbly devout [*qānitīn*]; the vigil kept in the last part of it is for worshippers devoted to the ritual prayer [*muṣallīn*]; and the vigil kept at the break of dawn [*qiyām al-fajr*] is for the heedless.

Yūsuf ibn Mihrān (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "Beneath the Heavenly Throne [*ʿArsh*], as I have been informed, there is an angel in the shape of a rooster [*dīk*]. Its talons are of pearl and its spurs of green topaz. When the first third of

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[57] The term *sunna* (of which *sunan* is the plural form) may be applied to a particular practice recommended by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as well as to his exemplary conduct in general. Although there are no capital letters in the Arabic script, it is convenient to mark the distinction, in transliteration, between the specific *sunna*/*sunan* and the general *Sunna*.

[58] See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

over having to part with his month,	*li-firāqi shahri-hi jaza'a-h:*
and who salutes his month	*wa sallama*
with the greeting of peace,	*'alā shahri-h*
and bids it farewell, and says:	*wa wadda'a-hu wa qāl*

"Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O month of Ramaḍān!	*yā shahra Ramaḍān*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O month of fasting and vigil	*yā shahra 's-ṣiyāmi wa 'l-qiyāmi*
and recitation of the Qur'ān!	*wa tilāwati 'l-Qur'ān*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O month of tolerance	*yā shahra 't-tajāwuzi*
and forgiveness!	*wa 'l-ghufrān*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O month of blessings	*yā shahra 'l-barakāti*
and active goodness!	*wa 'l-iḥsān*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O month of the treasures	*yā shahra 't-tuḥafi*
and the good pleasure [of the Lord]!	*wa 'r-riḍwān.*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O month of rituals	*yā shahra 'n-nusuki*
and constant devotion to worship.	*wa 't-ta'abbud:*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O month of fasting [by day]	*yā shahra 's-ṣiyāmi*
and vigil and prayer by night!	*wa 't-tahajjud:*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O month of the *tarāwīḥ*![341]	*yā shahra 't-tarāwīḥ:*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O month of the lights	*yā shahra 'l-anwār*
and the lamps!	*wa 'l-maṣābīḥ.*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O glory of the extollers!	*yā fakhra 'l-wāṣifīn:*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O light of the tender lovers!	*yā nūra 'l-wāmiqīn.*
Peace be upon you,	*as-salāmu 'alaika*
O garden of the worshipful!"	*yā rawḍata 'l-'ābidīn*

So, O month of ours,	*fa-yā*
we bid you farewell,	*shahra-nā*
but not because you are forsaken,	*ghaira muwaddi'in wadda'nā-k.*
and we part with you,	*wa ghaira*
but not because you are hated.[342]	*maqliyyin fāraqnā-k*

Your daytime has been devoted	*kāna nahāru-ka*
to charitable work and fasting,	*ṣadaqatan wa ṣiyāmā*
and your nighttime	*wa lailu-ka*
to reciting the Qur'ān	*qirā'atan*
and keeping vigil.	*wa qiyāmā*

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[341] See Vol. 3, pp 126–35.

[342] This is an allusion to Q. 93:1–5.

so to you now, from us, comes	*fa-ʿalai-ka min-nā*
a salutation and a farewell greeting.	*taḥiyyatun wa salāmā*
Shall we see you return to us again,	*a-narā-ka taʿūdu baʿda-hā ʿalai-nā:*
or is death destined to overtake us,	*aw yudriku-nā 'l-manūnu*
so that you do not come back to us?	*fa-lā taʿūdu ilai-nā*
Our lamps, for your duration, were	*maṣābīḥu-nā*
a well-known sight,	*fī-ka mashhūra*
and our mosques, for your duration,	*wa masājidu-nā*
were constantly frequented.	*fī-ka maʿmūra*
But now the lamps	*fa-'l-āna tanṭafi 'l-*
are being extinguished,	*maṣābīḥ*
and the *tarāwīḥ* prayers	*wa tanqaṭiʿu 't-*
are being discontinued.	*tarāwīḥ*
We are returning	*wa narjiʿu*
to our ordinary practice,	*ilā 'l-ʿāda*
and leaving the month	*wa nufāriqu*
of worshipful service.	*shahra 'l-ʿibāda:*
If only I knew	*fa-yā*
which one of us has been accepted,	*laita shiʿrī*
so that we could congratulate	*mani 'l-maqbūlu min-nā*
him on his excellent performance!	*fa-nuhanniʾa-hu bi-ḥusni ʿamali-h:*
Or if only I knew which one of us	*am laita shiʿrī*
has been rejected, so that we could	*mani 'l-maṭrūdu min-nā*
console him for his poor performance!	*fa-nuʿazziya-hu bi-sūʾi ʿamali-h:*
To you, O you who	*fa-yā ayyuha 'l-*
have been accepted,	*maqbūlu*
congratulations on Allāh's reward	*hanīʾan la-ka bi-thawābi 'llāhi—*
(Almighty and Glorious is He),	*ʿazza wa jall—*
and His good pleasure and His mercy,	*wa riḍwāni-hi wa raḥmati-hi*
and His forgiveness and His approval,	*wa ghufrāni-hi wa qabūli-hi*
and His beneficence and His pardon,	*wa iḥsāni-hi wa ʿafwi-hi*
and His gracious favor	*wa 'mtināni-hi*
and His [gift of] eternal life	*wa khulūdi-hi*
in the abode of His safekeeping.	*fī dāri amāni-h*
As for you, O you	*fa-yā ayyuha 'l-maṭrūdu*
who have been rejected,	*bi-idrāri-hi*
due to persistence	*bi-iṣrāri-hi*
in sin and transgression,	*wa-ṭughyāni-h*
and hostile aggression,	*wa ʿudwāni-h*
and heedlessness and deviation,	*wa ghaflati-hi wa khusrāni-h*
and wantonness and rebellion,	*wa tamādī-hi wa ʿiṣyāni-h*
you must bear the terrible affliction	*la-qad ʿaẓumat muṣībatu-ka*
of Allāh's wrath and degradation.	*bi-ghaḍabi 'llāhi wa hawāni-hi*
So where is your weeping eye?	*fa-aina muqlatu-ka 'l-bākiya*
Where are your streaming tears?	*wa aina damʿatu-ka 'l-jāriya.*

And where is	*wa aina*
your sighing and sobbing?	*zafratu-ka 'r-rā'ihatu 'l-ghādiya:*

Until what day have you deferred	*li-ayyi yaumin akhkharta*
your repentance?	*taubata-k:*
Until what year have you stored	*wa li-ayyi 'āmin 'ddakharta*
your promise away?	*'idata-k:*
Until some future date?	*ilā 'āmin qābil:*
Until a year has gone by?	*wa ḥaulin ḥā'il:*
Oh no! The span of life	*kallā fa-mā ilai-ka*
is not for you to decide,	*muddatu 'l-a'mār:*
and its full term is not for you to know.	*wa lā ma'rifatu 'l-maqādīr*

Many an optimist has hoped	*fa-kam min mu'ammilin*
to reach it [the next Fast],	*amala bulūgha-hu*
yet failed to reach it.	*fa-lam yablugh-h:*
Many a one has attained to it,	*wa kam min mudrikin la-hu*
but has not lived to complete it.	*wa lam yakhtim-h:*

Many a one has had	*wa kam*
a perfume prepared	*man a'adda ṭīban*
for his celebration of the Festival,	*li-'īdi-h:*
which was then applied	*ju'ila*
to his place of burial,	*fī talḥīdi-h:*
and had clothing tailored	*wa thiyāban*
for his adornment,	*li-tazyīni-h:*
which came to be a shroud	*ṣārat*
for his interment,	*li-takfīni-h:*
and has fully equipped himself	*wa muta'ahhiban*
for his breaking of the Fast,	*li-fiṭri-h:*
only to be deposited as a pledge	*ṣāra murtahanan*
in his grave.[343]	*fī qabri-h:*

Many a one will never keep a Fast	*wa kam man lā yaṣūmu*
like this again,	*ba'da-hu siwā-h:*
though he is looking forward eagerly	*wa huwa yaṭma'u*
to experiencing another	*fī ghairi-hi an yarā-h:*
[month of Ramaḍān].	

So praise Allāh, O servants of Allāh,	*fa-'hmadu 'llāha 'ibāda 'llāhi*
for the attainment of its completion,	*'alā bulūghi 'khtitāmi-h*
and beg Him to accept	*wa salū-hu*
the fasting in it,	*qabūla ṣiyāmi-h:*
and the vigil observed in it,	*wa qiyāmi-h:*
and be aware of Him	*wa rāqibū-hu*
in fulfilling His dues,	*bi-adā'i ḥuqūqi-h:*
and hold fast to Allāh's lifeline[344]	*wa 'ʿtaṣimū bi-ḥabli 'llāhi*
and His help.	*wa taufīqi-h:*

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[343] This is an allusion to Q. 52:21 and 74:38.

[344] This is an allusion to Q. 3:103.

You must also realize—may	*wa 'lamū—*
Allāh bestow His mercy upon you all—	*raḥima-kumu 'llāh—*
that you have just parted	*anna-kum fāraqtum*
with a mighty month,	*shahran 'aẓīmā*
[a month that is]	
gracious and munificent.	*mutafaḍḍilan karīmā.*

Where are those who fasted	*aina 'ṣ-ṣuwwāmu 'l-*
and kept vigil,	*quwwām:*
your counterparts	*al-muwāfiqūna la-kum*
in the years gone by?	*fī sālifi 'l-a'wām:*

Where are those	*wa aina man*
who used to be with you	*kāna ma'a-kum*
during the nights	*layālī shahri*
of the month of Ramaḍān,	*Ramaḍāna shāhidīn:*
bearing witness and discharging	*wa fī kulli ḥaqqi 'llāhi*
every duty to Allāh—	*mu'āmilīn*
those fathers and mothers,	*mina 'l-ābā'i wa 'l-ummahāti:*
and brothers and sisters,	*wa 'l-ikhwati wa 'l-akhawāti:*
and neighbors and close relatives?	*wa 'l-jīrati wa 'l-qurubāt:*
By Allāh, to them has come	*atā-hum wa 'llāhi*
the wrecker of delights,	*hādimu 'l-ladhdhāt*[344]*:*
the robber of desires,	*wa qāṭi'u 'sh-shahawāt:*
and the separator of communities.	*wa mufarriqu 'l-jamā'āt:*

It has left the gathering places	*fa-akhlā min-humu 'l-*
empty of them,	*mashāhid:*
and left the mosques devoid of them.	*wa 'aṭṭala min-humu 'l-masājid:*
You see them cast	*tarā-hum*
into the bellies of the tombs.	*fī buṭūni 'l-alḥādi ṣar'ā:*
They find no defense	*lā yajidūna li-mā*
against their situation,	*hum fī-hi daf'ā:*
and they possess no power	*wa lā yamlikūna li-anfusi-him*
to harm or benefit themselves.	*ḍarran wa lā naf'ā:*
They can only wait	*yantaẓirūna*
for a Day whereon	*yawmani 'l-umamu*
the nations will be	*fī-hi ilā*
summoned to their Lord,	*Rabbi-him tud'ā:*
and all creatures will be resurrected	*wa 'l-khalā'iqu tuḥsharu*
and hastily assembled	*ilā 'l-mawqifi*
at the Place of Standing.[345]	*wa tas'ā:*
All sinews will tremble and quake	*wa 'l-farā'iṣu tarta'idu min hawli*
from the terror of that Day,	*dhālika 'l-yawmi jam'ā:*
and all hearts will suffer devastation	*wa 'l-qulūbu tataṣadda'u*
from the shattering experience	*mina 'l-ḥisābi*
of the Reckoning.	*ṣad'ā:*

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[345] The earthly *mawqif*, i.e., the site at 'Arafāt where the rite of 'standing' [*wuqūf*] is performed during the Pilgrimage [*Hajj*], provides a foretaste of the experience that awaits us all on the Day of Resurrection, when we shall be gathered at the Place of Standing [*al-Mawqif*] on the field of Arafāt.

And a blast will be blown	*wa nufikha*
on the Trumpet,	*fi 'ṣ-ṣūri*
and then We shall	*fa-jama'nā-hum*
gather them together. (18:99)	*jam'ā*

O servants of Allāh!	*'ibāda 'llāhi*
whoever has restrained	*man kāna mana'a*
his lower self	*nafsa-hu*
from that which is unlawful,	*mina 'l-ḥarām*
during the month of Ramaḍān,	*fī shahri Ramaḍān*
let him continue to restrain it	*fa-'l-yamna'-hā fī-mā ba'da-hu*
in the ensuing months and years,	*mina 'sh-shuhūri wa 'l-a'wām:*
for the God of the two months	*fa-inna Ilāha 'sh-shahraini*
is One,	*Wāḥid*
and over the two periods of time	*wa Huwa 'alā 'z-zamānaini*
He is a Watchful Supervisor.	*Muṭṭali'un Shahīd.*

May Allāh compensate us,	*jazā-na 'llāhu*
and you too,	*wa iyyā-kum*
for the departure of	*'alā firāq*
the month of blessed grace.	*shahri 'l-baraka:*
May He grant us	*wa ajzala*
our allotted portions,	*aqsāma-nā*
and grant you	*wa*
your allotted portions,	*aqsāma-kum*
of His mercy that is shared by all.	*min raḥmati-hi 'l-mushtaraka:*
May He bless us,	*wa bāraka la-nā*
and bless you,	*wa la-kum*
with His perpetual favor,	*fī baqiyyati-h:*
and may He cause us, and you,	*wa salaka bi-nā wa bi-kum*
to travel the path of His guidance,	*ṭarīqa hidāyati-h:*
through His mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-hi*
His grace and His kindness.	*wa faḍli-hi wa minnati-h.*

O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
whatever You have apportioned,	*wa mā qasamta*
on this night,	*fī hādhihi 'l-lailati*
in the way of deliverance	*min 'itqin*
and forgiveness,	*wa ghufrān:*
and mercy and good pleasure,	*wa raḥmatin wa riḍwān:*
and pardon and benevolence,	*wa 'afwin wa 'imtinān:*
and munificence and benefaction,	*wa karamin wa iḥsān:*
and salvation from the Fires [of Hell],	*wa najātin mina 'n-nīrān:*
and everlasting sojourn	*wa khulūdin*
in the bliss of the Gardens	*fī na'īmi 'l-jinān*
[of Paradise], grant us	*fa-'j'al*
the most copious share thereof,	*la-nā min-hu*
and the most abundant portions,	*aufara 'l-ḥaẓẓi wa ajzala 'l-aqsām.*
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*

O Allāh, as You brought us	*Allāhumma fa-ka-mā ballaghta-nā*
the month of fasting,	*shahra 'ṣ-ṣiyām*
grant that our next year may be	*fa-'j'al 'āma-nā 'alai-nā*
one of the most	*min*
blessed of all our years,	*abraki 'l-a'wām*
and that our coming days may be	*wa aiyāma-nā*
among the happiest of all our days.	*min as'adi 'l-aiyām*
Accept from us	*wa taqabbal min-nā*
the fasting and the vigil	*mā qaddamnā-hu*
that we have offered up this month,	*fī-hi mina 'ṣ-ṣiyāmi wa 'l-qiyām*
and grant us forgiveness for the sins	*wa 'ghfir la-nā mā 'qtarafnā fī-hi*
we have committed in the course of it,	*mina 'l-āthām*
and rid us of the iniquities	*wa khalliṣ-nā*
of humankind,	*min maẓālimi 'l-anām.*
on the Day when	*yauma*
there will be no appeal	*lā yurjā*
to anyone apart from You.	*fī-hi siwā-k*
O All-Knowing One!	*yā 'Allām.*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*

O Allāh, we have undertaken	*Allāhumma innā qad tawallainā*
the [daytime] fasting of our month,	*ṣiyāma shahri-nā*
and its nighttime vigil,	*wa qiyāma-hu*
though quite inadequately.	*'alā taqṣīr:*
We have discharged	*wa adainā fī-hi*
in the course of it	*min ḥaqqi-ka*
no more than a little	*qalīlan*
of much that is due to You.	*min kathīr:*
We now stand begging at Your door,	*wa qad anakhnā bi-bābi-ka sā'ilīn:*
seeking Your gracious favor,	*wa li-ma'rūfi-ka ṭālibīn:*
so do not send us away disappointed,	*fa-lā taruddа-nā khā'ibīn:*
and despairing of Your mercy.	*wa lā min raḥmati-ka āyisīn:*

We are the poor folk who need You,	*fa-naḥnu 'l-fuqarā'u ilai-k:*
the captives who stand before You.	*al-usarā baina yadai-k.*
To You our application is addressed,	*ilai-ka tawajjuhu-nā.*
and for Your gracious favor	*wa li-ma'rūfi-ka*
our petition is lodged.	*ta'arruḍu-nā*
At Your door we have knocked,	*wa li-bābi-ka qara'nā*
and for Your mercy we have begged,	*wa min raḥmati-ka sa'alnā*
so treat our humility with compassion,	*fa-'rḥam khuḍū'a-nā*
and mend our hearts,	*wa 'jbur qulūba-nā.*
and overlook our faults,	*wa 'stur 'uyūba-nā*
and forgive our sins,	*wa 'ghfir dhunūba-nā*
and comfort us[340] at the Resurrection,	*wa aqirra fi 'l-qiyāmati 'uyūna-nā.*
and do not turn	*wa lā taṣrif*
Your Noble Countenance	*Wajha-ka 'l-Karīma*
away from us,	*'an-nā:*

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[340] Literally: "and cool our eyes."

and cause our work to be accepted,	*wa 'j'al 'amala-nā maqbūlā:*
and our striving to be acknowledged,	*wa sa'ya-nā mashkūrā*
and grant us this night	*wa ḥaẓẓa-nā*
an abundance of good fortune.	*fī hādhihi 'l-lailati mawfūrā*
O Allāh, if it is predetermined,	*Allāhumma in kāna*
according to Your foreknowledge,	*min sābiqi 'ilmi-ka*
that You will bring us together	*an tajma'a-nā*
in another [Ramaḍān] like this,	*fī mithli-h:*
let it be a blessed experience for us.	*fa-bārik la-nā fī-h*
And if You have foreordained	*wa in qaḍaita*
the termination of our life spans,	*bi-qaṭ'i ājāli-nā*
and that something will intervene	*wa mā yaḥūlu baina-nā*
to prevent us from surviving until then,	*wa baina-h:*
let our successors be good	*fa-aḥsini 'l-khilāfata*
to those we leave behind,	*'alā bāqī-nā:*
and view our past	*wa awsi'i 'r-raḥmata*
with generous compassion.	*'alā māḍī-nā*
Embrace us all completely	*wa 'ammi-nā jamī'an*
in Your mercy and Your forgiveness,	*bi-raḥmati-ka wa ghufrāni-k:*
and let the reunion take place	*wa 'j'ali 'l-maw'ida*
in the midst of Your Garden	*buḥbūḥa jannati-ka*
[of Paradise]	
and Your good pleasure,	*wa riḍwāni-k:*
in the company of those	*ma'a 'lladhīna an'amta 'alai-him*
to whom Allāh has granted	*mina 'n-nabiyyīna*
gracious favor—the Prophets,	*wa 'ṣ-ṣiddīqīna wa 'sh-shuhadā'i*
the champions of truth, the martyrs	*wa 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn:*
and the righteous—and the best	*wa ḥasuna ulā'ika*
of company are they![147]	*rafīqā.*
[Grant our requests]	
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
the occupants of the graves	*wa ahlu 'l-qubūri*
are the pledges of sins,	*rahā'inu dhunūbin*
not allowed to go free,	*lā yuṭlaqūn*
and prisoners in solitary confinement,	*wa asrā waḥshatin*
not to be released,	*lā yufakkūn:*
and absent travellers,	*wa ghurabā'u safarin*
not expected to return.	*lā yuntaẓarūn:*
The dust of the earth has erased	*maḥat dāmisatu 'th-tharā*
the good looks of their faces,	*maḥāsina wujūhi-him*
and the vermin live beside them	*wa jāwarat-humu 'l-hawāmmu*
in the vaults of their graves,	*fī malāḥidi qubūri-him:*
for they are still, incapable of talking,	*fa-hum jāmidūn lā yatakallamūn:*

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[147] These six lines, beginning with "in the company of those ...," constitute a partial quotation of Q. 4:69.

near neighbors	*wa jīrānun*
who cannot visit one another,	*qurbun lā yatazāwarūn*
and the inhabitants of a tomb,	*wa sukkānu laḥdin*
which they cannot leave	*ilā 'l-ḥashri*
until the Resurrection.	*lā yaẓ'anūn*
Among them are doers of good	*wa fī-him muḥsinūna*
and evildoers,	*wa musī'ūn*
and negligent types	*wa muqaṣṣirūna*
as well as hard workers.	*wa mujtahidūn*
O Allāh, if there is someone	*Allāhumma fa-man kāna*
amongst them who is already happy,	*min-hum masrūrā:*
grant him still more dignity and joy,	*fa-zid-hu karāmatan wa ḥubūrā:*
and if anyone amongst	*wa man kāna*
them is depressed,	*min-hum malhūfā*
replace his sadness	*fa-baddil ḥuzna-hu*
with joy and happiness.	*faraḥan wa surūrā*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
treat with compassion all the Muslims	*wa ta'aṭṭaf 'alā kāffati*
who have died while traveling,	*amwāti al-muslimīna 'r-rāḥilīn:*
and those who have surrendered	*wa 'l-muqīmīna 'l-*
their souls at home,	*mustaslimīn:*
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*
O Allāh, grant	*Allāhumma 'j'al*
that their graves may be	*qubūra-hum*
tunnels through which	*mafāwida*
Your blessings flow,	*ṣalawāti-k:*
and places where Your gifts are stored,	*wa maqārra hibāti-k:*
and paths for Your beneficence,	*wa ṭuruqa iḥsāni-k:*
and channels for Your pardon	*wa majāriya 'afwi-ka*
and forgiveness,	*wa ghufrāni-k.*
so that [their occupants]	*ḥattā yaskunū*
may rest in peace	*ilā buṭūni 'l-alḥādi*
within the confines of their tombs,	*muṭma'innīn*
assured of Your grace	*wa bi-faḍli-ka*
and generosity,	*wa karami-ka wāthiqīn*
and already advanced	*wa ilā a'lā*
to Your highest degrees.	*darajāti-ka sābiqīn*
Confer this special favor	*wa 'khṣuṣ bi-dhālika 'l-ābā'a*
on the fathers and the sons,	*wa 'l-banīn*
and the brothers and the next of kin.	*wa 'l-ikhwāna wa 'l-aqrabīn:*
[Confer it]	
before the work of demolition	*qabla an yashtamila 'l-hadmu*
wrecks the edifice completely,	*'alā 'l-binā'*
and murky gloom	*wa 'l-kadaru*

obliterates pure clarity,	*'alā 's-safā'*
and the cord of hope is cut	*wa yanqati'a mina 'l-hayāti*
adrift from life,	*hablu 'r-rajā'*
and the dwellings lie buried	*wa tasīra 'l-manāzilu*
beneath the layers of earth.	*tahta atbāqi 'th-tharā*
[Confer it] before the wind	*wa qabla an*
becomes a hurricane,	*yasīra 'r-rīhu wabā.*
and the drop becomes a flood,	*wa 'l-qatru saylā*
and the morning turns into a night,	*wa 's-subhu laylā*
and death drags a skirt across	*wa yashaba 'l-mawtu 'alā*
the inhabitants of the heavens	*ahli 's-samāwāti*
and the earth.	*wa 'l-ardi dhaylā*
[Confer it] before	*wa qabla an*
the grand old man cries:	*yaqūla 'sh-shaykhu 'l-kabīr:*
"White hair! What a pity!" and	*wāshaybāh*
the eminent middle-aged man cries:	*wa yaqūla 'l-kahlu 'l-khatīr:*
"Disgrace! What a pity!"	*wākhajlatāh*
and the guilty sinner cries:	*wa yaqūla 'l-mudhnibu 'l-musī':*
"Failure! What a pity!"	*wākhaybatāh*
and the young boy cries:	*wa yaqūla 'l-hadathu 's-saghīr:*
"Disappointment! What a pity!"	*wāhasratāh:*
[Confer it before]	
they are too ashamed	*wa istahyū min-hu*
and filled with dread,	*wa ashfaqū:*
and remorse has overwhelmed them,	*wa ghashiyat-hum mina 'n-nadāma:*
and their mouths have been sealed	*wa khutima 'alā afwāhi-him*
so that they cannot speak,	*fa-lā yantiqū:*
and all they can do is tilt their heads,	*wa waqafū 'alā 'amali*
so they bow their heads in silence,	*naksi 'r-ru'ūsi fa-atraqū:*
and they have witnessed	*wa 'āyanū mina 'l-ahwāli*
such terrors that	*mā waddū*
they dearly wish	*ma'a-hu anna-hum*
they had never been created.	*lam yukhlaqū:*
O Allāh, O Provider of nourishment,	*Allāhumma yā Sā'iqa 'l-qūt.*
O Hearer of the sound of the voice,	*yā Sāmi'a 's-sawt:*
O Clother of the bones after death,	*yā Kāsiya 'l-'izāmi ba'da 'l-mawt.*
bless Muhammad	*salli 'alā Muhammadin*
and the family of Muhammad.	*wa 'alā āli Muhammad*
Do not leave us, on this noble	*wa lā tada' la-nā fī hādhihi 'l-*
and blessed night of ours,	*laylati 'sh-sharīfati 'l-mubārakati*
with any sin	*dhanban*
that You have not forgiven,	*illā ghafarta-h*
nor with any care	*wa lā hamman*
that You have not dispelled,	*illā farajta-h*
nor with any worry	*wa lā karban*

2.
Concerning the significance of sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*.

As for the significance of sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

And they have been commanded	*wa mā umirū illā li-ya'budu 'llāha*
only to serve Allāh,	*mukhliṣīna*
making the religion His sincerely,	*la-hu 'd-dīn:*
as men of pure faith. (98:5)	*ḥunafā'a.*

He has told us (Glorious and Exalted is He):

Surely pure religion is only for Allāh. (39:3)[472]	*a-lā li'llāhi 'd-dīnu 'l-khāliṣ.*

He has said (Exalted is He):

Their flesh and blood	*lan yanāla 'llāha luḥūmu-hā*
do not reach Allāh, yet your	*wa lā dimā'u-hā wa lākin*
devotion reaches Him. (22:37)	*yanālu-hu 't-taqwā min-kum.*

He has also told us (Magnificent is His Majesty):

Say [to the people of the Scripture]:	*qul a-tuḥājjūna-na*
"Do you dispute with us	*fī 'llāhi*
concerning Allāh,	*wa Huwa Rabbu-nā*
when He is our Lord and your Lord?"	*wa Rabbu-kum.*
Ours are our works	*wa la-nā a'mālu-nā*
and yours are your works,	*wa la-kum a'mālu-kum:*
and we are sincerely devoted to Him. (2:139)	*wa naḥnu la-hu mukhliṣūn*

People have held differing opinions with regard to the meaning of sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*. For instance, it was al-Ḥasan [al-Basri][473] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

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[472] This verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān continues:

And those who choose protecting friends	*wa 'lladhīna 'ttakhadhū min dūni-hi*
apart from Him (say): "We only serve them	*awliyā'a mā na'budu-hum*
so that they may bring us	*illā li-yuqarribū-nā*
close in nearness to Allāh" (39:3)	*ila 'llāhi zulfā.*

[473] See note 74 on p. 40 above.

to pray for them,	du'ā'
and those whom we have asked	wa man sa'alnā-hu 'd-
to pray for us,	du'ā'
and those who have loved us	wa man aḥabba-nā
for Your sake,	fī-k
and those whom we have loved	wa man aḥbabnā-hu
for Your sake,	fī-k
and those who	wa man
have looked after us for Your sake,	tawallā-nā fī-k
and those we have looked after	wa man tawallaynā-hu
for Your sake.	fī-k
[Forgive] those of them	wa man kāna
who are still alive,	min-hum ḥayyā
and those who of them	wa man kāna
who are now dead.	min-hum mayyitā
[Grant our requests]	
through Your Mercy,	bi-raḥmati-ka
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.
O Allāh,	Allāhumma
O Knower of all secret things!	yā 'Ālima 'l-khafiyyāt:
O Dispeller of trials and tribulations!	wa yā Dāfi'a 'l-baliyyāt:
O You who are Responsive	wa yā Mujība 'd-
to supplications!	da'awāt:
O Remover of anxieties	wa yā Kāshifa 'l-
and apprehensions!	kurubāt:
Bless Muhammad,	ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
the most excellent of creatures.	afḍali 'l-bariyyāt:
Enable us to benefit by the signs	wa 'nfa'-nā bi-mā ṣarafta
which You have set forth	fī Kitābi-ka
in Your Book,	mina 'l-āyāt:
and allow us to atone for our misdeeds	wa kaffir 'an-nā
through the practice of its recitation.	bi-tilāwati-hi 's-sayyi'āt:
Promote us,	wa 'rfa'
through the fasting and vigil	la-nā bi-ṣiyāmi
of the month of Ramadān,	shahri Ramaḍāna wa qiyāmi-hi
to ascending degrees in Your presence.	'inda-ka 'd-darajāt.
[Grant our requests]	
through Your Mercy,	bi-raḥmati-ka
O Knower of all secret things.	yā 'Ālima 'l-khafiyyāt:
Bless Muhammad,	ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
and the family of Muhammād.	wa 'alā āli Muḥammad:
Forgive, through the Qur'ān,	wa 'ghfir bi'l-Qur'āni
our sinful ways,	khaṭāyā-nā:
and through it	wa ajzil
bestow on us abundant gifts,	bi-hi 'aṭāyā-nā:

and through it heal our sick,	*wa 'shfi bi-hi marḍā-nā:*
and through it	*wa 'rḥam*
have mercy on our dead,	*bi-hi mawtā-nā*
and through it	*wa aṣliḥ*
improve the state of our affairs,	*bi-hi umūra*
in both our religious	*dīni-nā*
and our worldly life,	*wa dunyā-nā*
and through it	*wa 'ḥuṭṭ bi-hi*
relieve us of the burden of sins.	*'an-nā thiqla 'l-awzār*
Confer on us	*wa hab la-nā*
the good qualities of the righteous.	*ḥusna shamā'ili 'l-abrār:*
Forgive us our slips and our stumbles.	*wa 'ghfir la-nā 'l-zalal wa 'l-'ithār:*
Purify our hearts	*wa ṭahhir la-nā 'l-qulūba*
and our innermost beings.	*wa 'l-asrār*
Improve through it the way we talk,	*wa ṭayyib la-nā bi-hi 'l-adhkār.*
and through it clean the way we think.	*wa ṣaffi la-nā bi-hi 'l-afkār;*
Reduce the market prices	*wa arkhiṣ*
for our benefit.	*la-nā 'l-as'ār.*
Avert from us the wickedness	*wa 'ṣrif 'an-nā*
of the bad	*sharra 'l-ashrār:*
and the cunning tricks	*wa kayda 'l-*
of the profligate.	*fujjār:*
Let us thrive on the love	*wa aḥyi-nā*
of the best of companions,	*'alā ḥubbi 'ṣ-ṣaḥābati 'l-akhyār:*
and unite us with them	*wa 'jma' baina-nā wa baina-hum*
in the abode of permanent stability,[548]	*fī dāri 'l-qarār:*
and include us among those	*wa 'j'al-nā min 'utaqā'i-ka*
whom You deliver from the Fire.	*mina 'n-nār:*

And give us in this world	*wa āti-nā fi 'd-dunyā*
that which is good,	*ḥasanatan*
and in the Hereafter	*wa fi 'l-ākhirati*
that which is good,	*ḥasanatan*
and guard us against	*wa qi-nā*
the torment of the Fire [of Hell].[549]	*'adhāba 'n-nār.*

[Grant our requests]	
through Your mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*

Praise be to Allāh	*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi*
for the bountiful gifts	*'alā sawābighi*
of His gracious favor,	*na'mā'i-h*
and His blessings be upon Muhammad,	*wa ṣalawātu-hu 'alā Muḥammadin*
the Seal of His Prophets,	*Khātami Anbiyā'i-h*
and upon his family, his companions	*wa 'alā āli-hi wa aṣḥābi-hi*
and his wives,	*wa azwāji-h*
and may He salute them all	*wa sallama*
with many greetings of peace.	*taslīman kathīrā.*

[548] This is an allusion to Q. 40:38,39.

[549] Q. 2:201.

and cause our work to be accepted,	*wa 'j'al 'amala-nā maqbūlā:*
and our striving to be acknowledged,	*wa sa'ya-nā mashkūrā*
and grant us this night	*wa ḥaẓẓa-nā*
an abundance of good fortune.	*fī hādhihi 'l-lailati mawfūrā*
O Allāh, if it is predetermined,	*Allāhumma in kāna*
according to Your foreknowledge,	*min sābiqi 'ilmi-ka*
that You will bring us together	*an tajma'a-nā*
in another [Ramaḍān] like this,	*fī mithli-h:*
let it be a blessed experience for us.	*fa-bārik la-nā fī-h*
And if You have foreordained	*wa in qaḍaita*
the termination of our life spans,	*bi-qaṭ'i ājāli-nā*
and that something will intervene	*wa mā yaḥūlu baina-nā*
to prevent us from surviving until then,	*wa baina-h:*
let our successors be good	*fa-aḥsini 'l-khilāfata*
to those we leave behind,	*'alā bāqī-nā:*
and view our past	*wa awsi'i 'r-raḥmata*
with generous compassion.	*'alā māḍī-nā*
Embrace us all completely	*wa 'umma-nā jamī'an*
in Your mercy and Your forgiveness,	*bi-raḥmati-ka wa ghufrāni-k:*
and let the reunion take place	*wa 'j'ali 'l-maw'ida*
in the midst of Your Garden	*buḥbūḥa jannati-ka*
[of Paradise]	
and Your good pleasure,	*wa riḍwāni-k:*
in the company of those	*ma'a 'lladhīna an'amta 'alai-him*
to whom Allāh has granted	*mina 'n-nabiyyīna*
gracious favor—the Prophets,	*wa 'ṣ-ṣiddīqīna wa 'sh-shuhadā'i*
the champions of truth, the martyrs	*wa 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn:*
and the righteous—and the best	*wa ḥasuna ulā'ika*
of company are they![347]	*rafīqā.*
[Grant our requests]	
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
the occupants of the graves	*wa ahlu 'l-qubūri*
are the pledges of sins,	*rahā'inu dhunūbin*
not allowed to go free,	*lā yuṭlaqūn*
and prisoners in solitary confinement,	*wa asrā waḥshatin*
not to be released,	*lā yufakkūn:*
and absent travellers,	*wa ghurabā'u safarin*
not expected to return.	*lā yuntaẓarūn:*
The dust of the earth has erased	*maḥat dārisatu 'th-tharā*
the good looks of their faces,	*maḥāsina wujūhi-him*
and the vermin live beside them	*wa jāwarat-humu 'l-hawāmmu*
in the vaults of their graves,	*fī malāḥidi qubūri-him:*
for they are still, incapable of talking,	*fa-hum jāmidūn lā yatakallamūn:*

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[347] These six lines, beginning with "in the company of those ...," constitute a partial quotation of Q. 4:69.

for You have always	*fa-inna-ka lam*
been Responsive—[491]	*tazal Mujībā*
and a seemly patience,[492]	*wa ṣabran jamīlā*
and an immunity	*wa ʿāfiyatan*
from all afflictions,	*min jamīʿi 'l-balāyā*
and a security	*wa salāmatan*
from the path of disasters,	*min ṭarīqi 'r-razāyā:*
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*
O Allāh,	*Allāhumma*
let our gathering together	*'jʿal 'jtimāʿa-nā 'jtimāʿan*
be mercifully blessed,	*marḥūman*
and may we be safely protected	*wa tafarruqa-nā*
when we go our separate ways.	*tafarruqan maʿṣūmā:*
Let no one amongst us	*wa lā tajʿal*
be unprosperous,	*fī-nā shaqiyyan*
and let no one be deprived.	*wa lā maḥrūmā*
Do not make us turn in poverty	*wa lā taruddu-nā bi'l-fāqati*
to others apart from You.	*ilā ghairi-k:*
Do not deprive us	*wa lā taḥrim-nā*
of the wealth of Your goodness,	*saʿata khairi-ka*
and the real experience	*wa ḥaqīqata 't-tawakkuli*
of total trust in You,	*ʿalai-ka*
and the genuine desire	*wa khāliṣa 'r-raghbati*
for that which is in Your presence.	*fī-mā ladai-k:*
Fill our hearts with enrichment	*wa 'mlaʾ qulūba-nā*
provided by You,	*min-ka 'l-ghinā:*
and clothe our faces with modesty	*wa 'ksu wujūha-nā*
in deference to You.	*min-ka 'l-ḥayāʾ:*
And grant us the goodness	*wa 'rzuq-nā*
of the Hereafter,	*khaira 'l-ākhirati*
as well as of this world,	*wa 'd-dunyā:*
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*
O Lord!	*yā Rabb:*
O Allāh, grant that we may enjoy	*Allāhumma 'rzuq-nā*
the goodness of the morning	*khaira 's-ṣabāḥi*
and the goodness of the evening,	*wa khaira 'l-masāʾi*
and the goodness	*wa khaira 'l-*
of the verdict of fate	*qaḍāʾi*
and the goodness	*wa khaira 'l-*
of the decree of destiny.	*qadar*

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[491] This is an allusion to Q. 11:61.

[492] This is an allusion to Q. 70:5.

[āyāt] and Prophetic traditions *[akhbār]* relating to the obligatory status *[wujūb]* of—, and to the proper times *[awqāt]* for their performance, 112–14. Special qualities of the—, 147–51. Importance of performing the—with all due care and attention to detail, and on what we know from traditional sources about the punishment awaiting those who neglect to perform them correctly, 160–63. See Cycles
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Prayer leader. Qualifications and responsibilities of the—*[imām]*, 189–96. Intention *[niyya]* of the—, his instructions to the congregation, and how he ought to station himself in the prayer-niche *[miḥrāb]*, 197–204.

2.

Traditional reports concerning the special value of fasting during the "white" days *[al-ayyām al-bīḍ]*.[512]

Shaikh Abū Nasr [Muhammad ibn al-Bannā'] has informed us, on good traditional authority,[513] that the following saying can be traced back to ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

"To fast on the thirteenth day of the month is equivalent in value to fasting for three thousand years.

"To fast on the fourteenth day of the month is equivalent in value to fasting for ten thousand years.

"To fast on the fifteenth day of the month is equivalent in value to fasting for one hundred and thirteen thousand years."

According to a traditional report transmitted by Abū Isḥāq, on the authority of Jarīr (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> To fast on three days out of every month, namely, the thirteenth and the fourteenth and the fifteenth, is equivalent to fasting all year long *[siyām ad-dahr]*.[514]

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of

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[512] See note 499 on p. 351 above.

[513] **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]* for this report. His own father [Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā']—Hilāl ibn Muhammad—an-Naqqāsh—al-Husain ibn Sufyān—Sulaimān ibn Yazīd, the client [mawlā] of the tribe of Banū Hāshim—ʿAlī ibn Yazīd—ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Hārūn [ibn ʿAntara]—Saʿīd ibn ʿUthmān—ʿAlī ibn al-Husain ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[514] According to several traditional reports, the actual practice of fasting all year long *[siyām ad-dahr]* was not encouraged by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), "lest a man should come to believe that this kind of fasting has been ordained by Allāh (Exalted is He), or, through physical incapacity, should become insincere, or because, by fasting all the days of the year, he would do so even on the days when fasting is strictly forbidden." (See: E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *ʿ-W-L*.)

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Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth

[Al Ghunya li-Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq]

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VOLUME FIVE

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Concerning the Modes of Conduct Proper to Spiritual Seekers
[Ādāb al-Murīdīn]

Referring to those genuine spiritual paupers *[fuqarā']* who follow the path of Ṣūfism *[ṭarīq aṣ-Ṣūfiyya]*, meaning those who have come to be clear *[ṣafaw]* of the influence of whims and passions that lead astray, and who have forsaken immoral traits of character, so that they have entered the company of the spiritual deputies *[abdāl]* and the people of sainthood *[ahl al-wilāya]*, and have acquired the distinctive attributes of essentiality *[ittaṣafū bi'l-'ainiyya]*.

(The subject is treated in summary and concise fashion,
for fear of causing boredom and ennui.)

◆

Concerning the spiritual search *[irāda]*, the seeker *[murīd]*, and the one who is sought *[murād]*.

As for the spiritual search *[irāda]*, it entails the abandonment of the usual approach to life *['āda]*, and its actualization *[taḥqīq]* occurs through commitment of the heart to the quest for the Lord of Truth (Glory be to Him), and detachment from everything apart from Him. When the servant [of the Lord] forsakes the usual approach to life, which is concerned with the luxuries *[ḥuẓūẓ]* of this world and the hereafter, only then does his commitment to the spiritual search *[irāda]* become absolute.

The wish to seek *[irāda]* comes first and foremost. Then it is followed by the intention *[qaṣd]*, and then by the action *[fi'l]*. It is therefore the beginning of the path *[ṭarīq]* for every spiritual traveler *[sālik]*, and the name of the first stage for every intentional seeker *[qāṣid]*. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) said to His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

And do not drive away	*wa lā taṭrudi 'lladhīna*
those who call upon their Lord	*yad'ūna Rabba-hum*
at morning and evening,	*bi'l-ghadāti wa 'l-'ashiyyi*
seeking His countenance. (6:52)	*yurīdūna Wajha-h.*

He thus forbade His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to drive them away and keep them at a distance. Then, in another Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*, He said (Exalted is He):

And keep yourself patient with those	*wa 'ṣbir nafsa-ka ma'a 'lladhīna*
who cry unto their Lord	*yad'ūna Rabba-hum*
at morning and evening,	*bi'l-ghadāti wa 'l-'ashiyyi*
seeking His countenance,	*yurīdūna Wajha-hu*
and do not let your eyes	*wa lā ta'du 'ainā-ka*
overlook them, seeking the pomp	*'an-hum: turīdu*
of the life of this world. (18:28)	*zīnata 'l-ḥayāti 'd-dunyā.*

Thus did He command His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to practice patience *[sabr]* with them, to stay with them, and to keep himself patient in their company. He also described them as "seeking His countenance." Then He went on to say: "And do not let your eyes overlook them, seeking the pomp of the life of this world." From this it is clear that the real meaning of the spiritual search *[haqīqat al-irāda]* is the search for the countenance of Allāh, and nothing else. That is the true beauty of life, in this world and the hereafter.

As for the seeker *[murīd]* and the one who is sought *[murād]*, the seeker is someone who has all this within him, and who fits this description, so that he is always dedicated to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), engaged in worshipful obedience to Him, indifferent to anyone but Him, and responsive to no one but Him. He listens attentively to his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), so he acts in accordance with what is in the Book [of Allāh] and the Sunna [the exemplary practice of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)], while he remains completely deaf to everything apart from that. He sees by the light of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), so he sees nothing but His action at work, on himself and on the rest of His creatures. He is blind to everything else, for he sees none other than Him (Almighty and Glorious is He) as an effective cause *[fā'il]* in reality. He regards anything else as merely an instrument and a means *[sabab]*, that is moved, managed, and put to use [by His action].

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> **Your love of the thing makes you blind and deaf.**

That is to say, it makes you blind and deaf to everything other than the thing you love, because of your total preoccupation with the object of your love.

The servant does not experience love until he becomes a seeker, and he does not become a seeker until his commitment to the search is absolute. His commitment to the search does not become absolute, until the firebrand of reverent awe *[jamrat al-khashya]* has been cast into his heart, and has burned everything it contains. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

Kings, when they enter a township,	*inna 'l-mulūka idhā dakhalū*
ruin it and make the noblest	*qaryatan afsadū-hā wa ja'alū*
of its people the lowest. (27:34)	*a'izzata ahli-hā adhilla.*

A fit of love's ardor *[lauʿa]* dwarfs any fit of terror *[rauʿa]*, as the saying goes, so he must only sleep when slumber overwhelms him, eat out of dire necessity, and speak in extreme emergency. He must always admonish his lower self *[nafs]*, and refuse to grant it the things it loves, and the worldly pleasures it craves. He must also give sincere advice to his fellow servants of Allāh, while he enjoys intimate converse with Allāh in private. He must be steadfast in refraining from all forms of disobedience to Allāh (Exalted is He). He must readily accept the verdict of Allāh, regard Allāh's commandment as the best, and feel a sense of shame under Allāh's scrutiny. He must devote every effort to promoting the causes that Allāh loves. He must always seize any opportunity that will connect him to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). He must be content with obscurity and absence from public view, for he must not try to attract the praise of his fellow servants of Allāh. He must endear himself to his Lord, through the frequent performance of supererogatory acts of worship *[nawāfil]*, devoting himself sincerely to Allāh, so that he may attain to contact with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and join the company of the beloved friends *[aḥbāb]* of Allāh, and His seekers *[murīdī-hi]*.

He will then be called a *murād* [one who is sought]. He will shed the burdens borne by the travelers on Allāh's path *[sālikī tarīqi'llāh]*, and bathe in the water of Allāh's merciful compassion, His gentle kindness, and His gracious favor. A house will be constructed for him in the vicinity of Allāh, and robes of honor of many kinds will be conferred upon him. This means nothing less than direct experience *[maʿrifa]* of Allāh, intimate friendship *[uns]* with Him, and peace and tranquillity in His presence.

He will utter the wisdom *[hikma]* of Allāh, and the secrets *[asrār]* of Allāh, after receiving explicit permission, or rather, direct communication *[khabar]* from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). He will be awarded some of the titles *[alqāb]* by which distinctions are conferred among Allāh's beloved friends, and so he will enter the special élite *[khawāṣṣ]* of Allāh. He will also be called by names known only to Allāh. He will be privy to secrets made accessible only to him, so he must not divulge them in the presence of anyone other than Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). He will hear from Allāh, see because of Allāh, speak because of Allāh, and strike with the strength of Allāh. He will strive in obedience to Allāh, rely entirely on Allāh, and sleep in the company of obedience to Allāh. He will remember Allāh in the protection of Allāh, and in Allāh's safekeeping, for he will be one of Allāh's trusted agents [*umanā'*] and witnesses [*shuhadā'*], one of the mainstays [*awtād*] of His earth, and the savior [*munjī*] of His servants and His lands, His loved ones and His bosom friends [*akhillā'*].

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said, acting as a spokesman for Allāh (Exalted is He):

> My believing servant continues to draw near to Me, through supererogatory acts of worship [*nawāfil*], until I love him, and when I love him, I become his hearing and his sight, and his tongue, and his hand and his foot, and his heart, so through Me he hears, through Me he sees, through Me he speaks, through Me he understands, and through Me he strikes.

The mind [*'aql*] of this servant is now controlled by the Supreme Intelligence, his instinctual movements have been subdued in the grasp of the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He), and his heart has become the treasure house of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). So this is the one who is sought by Allāh [*murādu'llāh*], if you wish to recognize him, O servant of Allāh!

According to some of our predecessors among the servants of Allāh (Exalted is He), the seeker [*murīd*] and the sought [*murād*] are one and the same, for if it were not the wish [*murād*] of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) that he should seek Him, he would not be a seeker [*murīd*]. Nothing comes into being, except what He wishes, because it is only when the Lord of Truth [*Ḥaqq*] wishes something in particular, that He causes it to be, in compliance with His wish [*irāda*].

Others have said: "The seeker [*murīd*] is the beginner, and the sought [*murād*] is the one who has reached the final stage."

"The seeker [*murīd*] is the one who is made to suffer the very essence of exhaustion, and is thrust into the hardest of hardships. As for the sought [*murād*], he is the one who goes about his business without any difficult problems."

"The seeker [*murīd*] is made tired and weary, while the sought [*murād*] is treated gently and made comfortable."

For those who deliberately set out [*qāṣidīn*], as beginners [*mubtadi'īn*], on the course prescribed by Allāh (Exalted is He), progress is therefore most likely to be made through strenuous efforts [*mujāhadāt*], supported by the enabling guidance *[taufīq]* of Allāh (Exalted is He). This will eventually lead them to Him, and to the unloading of their burdens. They will then obtain relief from many of their supererogatory duties *[nawāfil]*, and from having to abstain from all pleasures. Their duty will be limited to the performance of the elements that are obligatory *[farā’iḍ]* and customary *[sunan]*, in all acts of worshipful service *[‘ibādāt]*, and to the preservation of their hearts, observance of the rules, respect for the dignity of their station, and keeping their hearts detached from everything other than the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He).

Their outer beings *[ẓawāhir]* will thus be with the creatures of Allāh (Exalted is He), while their inner beings *[bawāṭin]* are with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). Their tongues will be governed by Allāh's wise decree *[ḥukm]*, and their hearts by the knowledge *[‘ilm]* of Allāh, since their tongues are for giving sound advice to Allāh's servants, while their innermost beings *[asrār]* are for the safekeeping of Allāh's deposits. They will henceforth enjoy the peace of Allāh, His greetings, His blessings, His mercy, and His salutation, as long as His earth and His heaven endure, and as long His servants practice obedience to Him, respect His right, and observe His rules.

When someone asked al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) about the seeker *[murīd]* and the sought *[murād]*, he replied: "The seeker *[murīd]* is governed by the management of knowledge *[siyāsat al-‘ilm]*, while the one who is sought *[murād]* is governed by the protective custody of the Truth *[Ḥaqq]*, because the seeker *[murīd]* travels on the surface of the earth, while the sought *[murād]* flies through the air. When will the traveler *[sā’ir]* catch up with the flier *[ṭā’ir]*?"

The difference becomes apparent through comparing Moses *[Mūsā]* and our own Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace). Moses (peace be upon him) was a seeker *[murīd]*, while our Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was sought *[murād]*. The overland journey of Moses (peace be upon him) ended on Mount Sinai *[Ṭūr Sīnā’]*, while the airborne journey of our Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) ended at the Heavenly Throne *[‘Arsh]* and the Well-Kept Tablet *[al-Lauḥ al-Maḥfūẓ]*.

The seeker is in pursuit *[al-murīd ṭālib]*, while the sought is being pursued *[al-murād maṭlūb]*.

The service of the seeker is a strenuous effort [*'ibādat al-murīd mujāhada*], while the service of the sought is a talent [*'ibādat al-murād mawhiba*].

The seeker is existent [*al-murīd mawjūd*], while the sought is nonexistent [*al-murād fān*].

The seeker works with a particular purpose in view, while the sought does not notice the work, but only the enabling guidance [*tawfīq*] and gracious favors [of Allāh]. The seeker works to make progress along the path, while the sought stands at the junction of every road.

The seeker sees by the light of Allāh, while the sought sees because of Allāh.

The seeker stands up at Allāh's command, while the sought stands up through the action of Allāh.

The seeker opposes his passion, while the sought is free from the influence of his self-will and his desires.

The seeker draws near, while the sought is drawn near.

The seeker is grim and stern, while the sought is playful, pampering, nurturing, and indulgent.

The seeker is protected, while the sought is entrusted with his protection.

The seeker [*murīd*] is in still in progress [*taraqqī*], while the sought [*murād*] has arrived and reached the Lord, who is the One who causes progress [*al-Muraqqī*], and he has obtained, in His presence, everything that is rare and precious, delicate and pure, and permissible to every servant who is obedient, worshipful, attentive, pious, and devoted to his duty.

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What is the fledgling Ṣūfi *[mutaṣawwif]*, and what is the full-fledged Ṣūfi?

As for the fledgling Ṣūfi *[mutaṣawwif]*, he is someone who has set himself the task of becoming a Ṣūfi, and who is prepared to work hard at becoming a Ṣūfi. Once he has committed himself, adopted the method of the Ṣūfis *[tariq al-qawm]*,[1] and made it his own, he is called a *mutaṣawwif*, just as someone who takes to wearing a *qamīṣ* [shirt] is called a *mutaqammiṣ*, and someone who takes to wearing a *durrāʿa* [loose outer garment with sleeves, slit in front] is called a *mutadarriʿ*.

By the same token, someone who embarks on the practice of *zuhd* [pious abstinence] is called a *mutazahhid* [fledgling ascetic]. If he persists in his abstinence *[zuhd]*, right through to the final stage, things will be made to hate him, and he will lose all interest in them, so each will forsake the other, and he will then be called a *zāhid* [full-fledged ascetic]. Once he has reached that stage, things will come to him, even though he does not wish to acquire them. Instead of hating them, however, he will simply obey Allāh's commandment concerning them, and wait to see what Allāh does with them. This explains the use, in a parallel context, of the terms *mutaṣawwif* [fledgling Ṣūfi] and *Ṣūfi* [full-fledged Ṣūfi].

The form of the word *Ṣūfi* corresponds to *fūʿila* [the pattern of one kind of passive verb, of which *fāʿala* is the active form], and it is derived from the same root as *muṣāfāh* [favorable treatment]. It therefore signifies a servant whom the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He) has treated favorably *[ṣāfā]*.

This also explains why, as someone put it: "The Ṣūfi is someone who is clear *[ṣāfi]* of the blights of the lower self *[nafs]*, devoid of its blameworthy characteristics, traveling to One whose ways are praiseworthy, adhering to the true realities *[ḥaqā'iq]*, and not relying with his heart on any mere creatures *[khalā'iq]*."

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[1] Literally, "the method of the people [of the Spiritual Path]".

The following sayings are also worthy of note:

"Ṣūfism [*taṣawwuf*] means being truthful with the Truth [*Ḥaqq*], and on your best behavior with His creatures [*khalq*]."

"As for the difference between the fledgling Ṣūfī [*mutaṣawwif*] and the full-fledged Ṣūfī, the former is the novice, while the latter is the graduate."

"The fledgling Ṣūfī [*mutaṣawwif*] is the one who is just starting out on the road, while the full-fledged Ṣūfī is the one who has traveled the road, and arrived at the One who makes both the traveling and the arrival worthwhile."

"The fledgling Ṣūfī [*mutaṣawwif*] is a carrier [*mutaḥammil*], while the full-fledged Ṣūfī is carried [*maḥmūl*]."

The fledgling Ṣūfī [*mutaṣawwif*] must carry every burden, both heavy and light, until his lower self [*nafs*] dissolves, his passion fades away, and his self-will and self-reliance are annihilated. He thus becomes pure [*ṣāfī*], and worthy to be called a Ṣūfī. He has finished carrying, so he now becomes the cargo of destiny [*maḥmūl al-qadar*], the polo-ball of the divine will [*kurat al-mashī'a*], the protégé of holiness [*murabba 'l-quds*], the fount of all kinds of knowledge and wisdom [*manba' al-'ulūm wa 'l-ḥikam*], the house of safety and success [*bait al-amn wa 'l-fauz*], the cave of the saints and the spiritual deputies [*kahf al-auliyā' wa 'l-abdāl*], and their refuge, their resort, their breathing space, their place of rest and happy relaxation. For he is the gem of the necklace, the pearl of the crown, and the spyglass of the Lord.

As a fledgling Ṣūfī [*mutaṣawwif*], the seeker [*murīd*] is still encumbered by his lower self [*nafs*], his passionate desire, his devil [*shaiṭān*], the creatures of his Lord, and his worldly and otherworldly interests. He is trying to serve his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), through detachment from his surroundings,[2] and from things, by refusing to act because of them, conform to their demands, and yield to their pressures, and through the purification [*taṣfiya*] of his inner being [*bāṭin*], by ridding it of its inclination toward them, and its preoccupation with them.

He must therefore oppose his devil [*shaiṭān*], abandon his worldly interests, and part company with his cronies and all the other creatures of his Lord, at His behest (Almighty and Glorious is He), in order to pursue his interest in the hereafter. Then he must struggle with his lower self *[nafs]* and his passionate desire, at Allāh's command (Almighty and Glorious is He), until he achieves detachment from his interest in the hereafter, and that which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has prepared therein for His saints *[auliyā']*, including the Garden of Paradise, because of his greater longing for his Master *[Maulā]*.

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[2] Literally, "from the six directions [before and behind, right and left, above and below]."

He will thus depart from all the created realms of being *[akwān]*, for he will be purified *[yusaffā]* of all phenomena *[ahdāth]*, and exist in his essential nature because of the Lord of humankind *[yatajawharu li-Rabb al-anām]*. He will experience detachment from all ties and secondary causes *[asbāb]*, including family and children. All ordinary directions will be closed off from him, and the Direction of directions *[Jihat al-jihāt]* will be opened in his view, as will the Gate of gates *[Bāb al-abwāb]*. This is the state of contentment with the verdict of the Lord of humankind *[Rabb al-anām]* and the Lord of lords *[Rabb al-arbāb]*. It is the state in which he is operated by the action of the One who has full knowledge *[al-'Ālim]* of what has been, and what is yet to come, the One who is fully Aware *[al-Khabīr]* of all things secret and hidden, of what motivates the limbs and organs of the body, and of what hearts and intentions conceal.

This gate will then open up toward him, a gate called the Gate of Nearness to the Sovereign *[al-Malik]*, the Judge *[ad-Dayyān]*. Then he will be raised up from it to the sessions of intimate friendship *[majālis al-uns]*. Then he will be seated on the pedestal of the affirmation of Oneness *[tauhīd]*. Then the veils will be removed from him. He will enter the Abode of Uniqueness *[Dār al-Fardāniyya]*, and Majesty *[Jalāl]* and Splendor *['Aẓama]* will be revealed to him. As soon as his gaze alights on the Majesty and Splendor, he will be left without himself, extinct to his own person and his attributes, to his own power and strength, to his movements, his will, his desire, his interest in this world, and his interest in the hereafter.

He will come to resemble a crystal container, filled with pure water, in which only phantom shapes are visible, for nothing controls him, other than the divine decree *[qadar]*, and nothing compels him, other than the divine command *[amr]*. He is extinct *[fān]* to himself and to his fortune *[hazz]*, existing *[maujūd]* only because of his Master *[Maulā]* and His command. He does not seek privacy *[khalwa]*, because privacy is only important to someone who exists [in this world]. He is like the infant who does not eat, until he is fed, and does not wear clothes, until someone clothes him, for he is completely resigned and committed. [He is like those of whom Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:]

And we turned them over to the right,	*wa nuqallibu-hum dhāta 'l-yamīni*
then over to the left,	*wa dhāta 'sh-shimāl:*
while their dog	*wa kalbu-hum*
was stretching out its paws	*bāsiṭun dhirā'ai-hi*
on the threshold. (18:18)	*bi'l-waṣīd.*

Though he does still exist among creatures, in physical form, he is separate from them in their actions and deeds, their secret thoughts and external behavior, their consciences and their intentions.

Once he has reached this stage, he is rightly called a Ṣūfī, in the sense that he is kept in a state of purity *[yuṣaffā]*, unsullied by the dirt of the created universe and the creatures it contains. If you wish, you may call him one of the spiritual deputies *[badal min al-abdāl]*, one of the eminent individuals *['ain min al-a'yān]*, someone who really knows *['ārif]* himself and his Lord, the One who is the Reviver of the dead *[Muḥyi 'l-amwāt]*, the One who rescues His saints *[auliyā']* from the gloom and darkness of their lower selves *[nufūs]*, their natural urges, passions and errors, and leads them to the courtyard of remembrance *[dhikr]*, direct experiences *[ma'ārif]*, all kinds of knowledge *['ulūm]*, mysteries *[asrār]*, and the light of nearness, and then to His own light (Almighty and Glorious is He), for:

Allāh is the Light of the heavens and	*Allāhu nūru 's-samāwāti wa 'l-arḍ:*
the earth. The similitude of His light	*mathalu nūri-hi*
is as a niche wherein is a lamp.	*ka-mishkātin fī-hā miṣbāḥ:*
The lamp is in a glass.	*al-miṣbāḥu fī zujāja:*
The glass is as it were a shining star.	*az-zujājatu ka-anna-hā kaukabun*
[This lamp is] kindled	*durrīyun yūqadu min shajaratin*
from a blessed tree, an olive	*mubārakatin zaitūnatin*
neither of the East nor of the West,	*lā sharqīyatin wa lā gharbīyatin*
whose oil would almost glow forth	*yakādu zaitu-hā yuḍī'u*
[of itself] though no fire touched it.	*wa lau lam tamsas-hu nār:*
Light upon light. Allāh guides	*nūrun 'alā nūr: yahdi 'llāhu*
to His light whom He will.	*li-nūri-hi man yashā':*
And Allāh speaks to mankind	*wa yaḍribu 'llāhu 'l-amthāla*
in allegories, for	*li'n-nās:*
Allāh is Knower of all things.	*wa 'llāhu bi-kulli shai'in 'Alīm.*
(24:35)	

Allāh is the Protecting Friend	*Allāhu Walīyu 'lladhīna*
of those who believe. He brings them	*āmanū yukhriju-hum*
out of the darkness into the light.	*mina 'ẓ-ẓulumāti ila 'n-nūr.*
(2:257)	

Allāh (Exalted is He) has thus undertaken to bring them out of the darkness into the light. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has made them aware of what the hearts of His servants conceal, and what their intentions involve, for my Lord has appointed them to be the spies *[jawāsīs]* of hearts, and the trustees *[umanā']* of secrets and hidden thoughts. He has also granted them protection from their enemies, in private and public situations alike. No misleading devil *[shaiṭān]*, and no passionate desire, can succeed in tempting them to make mistakes, for Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

As for My servants,	*inna 'ibādī*
you have no authority over them.	*laisa la-ka 'alai-him sulṭānun.*
(15:42)	

The Ṣūfī is neither controlled by a self that is always inciting to evil *[nafs ammāra bi's-sū']*, nor dominated by a compelling lust, that would urge him to pursue destructive pleasures at the lowest levels, beyond the pale of the people of the Sunna and the orthodox communities *[jamā'āt]*. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

So it was, that We might turn evil	*ka-dhālika li-naṣrifa*
and lewdness away from him;	*'an-hu 's-sū'a wa 'l-faḥshā':*
he was surely one	*inna-hu min*
of Our devoted servants. (12:24)	*'ibādi-na 'l-mukhlaṣīn.*

This means that my Lord has rendered them immune, and that He has curbed the stupid follies and addictions of their lower selves *[nufūs]*, by the authority of Subjugating Power *[Jabarūt]*. He has thus established them in their spiritual degrees, and enabled them to fulfill the necessary requirement, just as He enabled them to fulfill the requirement of truthfulness *[ṣidq]* in the course of their journey, and of patience *[ṣabr]* at the stage of their isolation and dire need. They discharged the obligatory religious duties *[farā'iḍ]*, observed the rules and the commandments, and steadfastly adhered to the degrees of spiritual progress, until they were rectified, corrected, purified, educated, cleansed, improved, enriched, augmented, encouraged and fortified, so they received the full benefit of Allāh's friendship and protection. As He has said (Exalted is He):

Allāh is the Protecting Friend	*Allāhu Waliyyu 'lladhīna*
of those who believe. (2:257)	*āmanū yukhriju-hum.*
And He befriends	*wa Huwa*
and protects the righteous. (7:196)	*yatawallā 's-ṣāliḥīn.*

From their various degrees of progress, they were transported toward the Owner of Sovereignty [*Mālik al-Mulk*], for He arranged that process for them in His presence. Their secret conversation [*najwā*] came to be a face-to-face encounter [*kifāḥ*], in which they confided in Him with their hearts and their innermost beings [*asrār*]. They made Him the sole focus of their attention, to the exclusion of everything apart from Him. They were banned from their own persons, and from every single thing, for He is the Lord and Master of everything whatsoever. He kept them within his grasp, bound them to their rational faculties, and appointed them to be His trusted agents [*umanā'*].

They are therefore safe within His grasp, His protective custody and His guardianship. They savor the fragrant scent of nearness, and live their lives in the amplitude of the affirmation of Oneness [*tauḥīd*] and merciful compassion [*raḥma*], for they are not concerned with anything, apart from whatever actions He permits them to undertake.

When the time comes for their bodies to be active, rather than their hearts, they must proceed to act with caution, to avoid the harmful influences exerted by their devils [*shayāṭīn*], their lower selves [*nufūs*], and their passionate desires [*ahwiya*]. Their actions will then be rendered safe, by denying the devils a chance to exploit the foibles of their lower selves [*nufūs*], such as ostentation [*riyā'*], hypocrisy [*nifāq*], vain conceit [*'ujb*], the pursuit of worldly aims [*aghrāḍ*], the idolatrous worship [*shirk*] of some created thing, and reliance on human power and strength [*ḥaul wa quwwa*].

They must regard all that as a gracious favor from Allāh. They must see it as an opportunity created by Allāh, and acquired by them through His enabling grace [*taufīq*], so that they do not depart from the norms of right guidance [*sunan al-hudā*], after being confirmed in this belief [*'aqīda*]. Then, after fulfilling those commandments, and completing those undertakings, they will be returned to their spiritual stations, to which they have adhered in the meantime, and which they have maintained and preserved, with their hearts and their consciences.

Once they have been appointed trustees [*umanā'*], they may be assigned to a particular situation, and each of them will then be addressed individually, according to his situation.

You are today in Our presence, established and worthy of trust. (12:54)	*inna-ka 'l-yauma ladai-nā* *makīnun amīn*.

In dealing with their assignment, they will not need to seek permission, because they have come to be like those who are entrusted with the handling of their business, for they are held within His grasp, whatever course they may take in any of their affairs. This is confirmed by the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in which he relates, on the authority of Gabriel *[Jibrīl]* (peace be upon him), that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) declared:

> My servant does not draw near to Me through anything comparable to My obligatory duties *[farā'iḍ]*. He must surely draw near to Me, through supererogatory acts of worship *[nawāfil]*, until I love him, and when I love him, I become his hearing and his sight, and his tongue, and his hand and his foot, and his heart, so through Me he hears, through Me he sees, through Me he speaks, through Me he understands, and through Me he strikes.

We have mentioned this traditional report *[khabar]* at several points in this book, because it is the basic text concerning this spiritual station. The heart of this servant must be filled with the love of his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), with His light, with knowledge *['ilm]* of Him, and with direct awareness *[ma'rifa]* of Him, for it cannot otherwise be sound. Please consider the words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> If anyone loves to see a man who loves Allāh with all his heart, let him look at Sālim, the freedman *[mawlā]* of Abū Ḥudhaifa (may Allāh be well pleased with him).[3]

He said this because that man's outer being *[ẓāhir]* was moved and operated by the action of Allāh (Exalted is He), while his inner being *[bāṭin]* was filled by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

Moses *[Mūsā]* (peace be upon him) once said: "O my Lord, where must I seek, in order to find You?" His Lord replied: "O Moses, what house is big enough to contain Me? What place can support Me? If you wish to know where I am, I am in the heart of the abstainer *[tārik]*, the one who says goodbye [to worldly attachments] *[wādi']*, the one who is truly virtuous *['afīf]*."

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[3] Abū 'Abdi'llāh Ḥudhaifa ibn al-Yamān al-'Absī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was among the earliest to embrace Islām, and he came to be one of the most distinguished of all the Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He was famous for his dedication to an abstinent way of life. Together with Abu 'd-Dardā' and Abū Dharr (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), he was one of those Companions who were called *ṣāḥib sirr an-Nabī*, because of the secret knowledge imparted to them by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He died in A.H. 36.

The abstainer [*tārik*] is someone who abstains by making an effort, and in whom there is still a surviving remnant [of worldly attachment]. Then his Lord treats him graciously, so he says goodbye to it by dying to it. Then it is totally obliterated, so he pays attention to nothing apart from his Master [*Maulā*]. Someone may well ask: "So what is the gracious favor that his Lord bestows upon him?" To this our reply will be: "It means that He (Almighty and Glorious is He) will establish him in the appropriate spiritual degree, with the stipulation of strict adherence to it, to ensure that he acts accordingly. Provided he fulfills the precondition, and does not attempt to act or function in any other way, but observes it strictly, and commits no trangression, He will then transport him from that degree, to reside in the Domain of Subjugating Power [*Mulk al-Jabarūt*]. He will thus subdue his lower self [*nafs*], and then tame it, by the authority of the Subjugating Power [*Jabarūt*], until it is rendered humble and submissive.

"Then He will transport him to the Domain of Authority [*Mulk as-Sulṭān*], so that he may go through basic training. He must be purged of those abscesses in his lower self [*nafs*], for they are the roots of those carnal desires, which have formed a solid tumor [*ghudda*] therein. Then He will transport him to the Domain of Majesty [*Mulk al-Jalāl*], so that he may receive an education. Then He will transport him to the Domain of Beauty [*Mulk al-Jamāl*], so that he may be inwardly purified. Then He will transport him to the Domain of Splendor [*Mulk al-ʿAzama*], so that he may be outwardly cleansed. Then He will transport him to the Domain of Brilliance [*Mulk al-Bahā'*], so that he may be improved and refined. Then to the Domain of Resplendence [*Mulk al-Bahja*], so that he may be enriched. Then to the Domain of Reverence [*Mulk al-Haiba*], so that he may receive advanced instruction. Then to the Domain of Merciful Compassion [*Mulk ar-Rahma*], so that he may be mellowed, strengthened and encouraged. Then He will transport him to the Domain of Individuality [*Mulk al-Fardiyya*], so that he may be treated as a unique individual.

"Gentle kindness will nourish him. Tender care will surround him and embrace him. Loving affection will strengthen him. Ardent longing will draw him close, and yearning desire will impel him to move toward Him. The All-Generous and All-Glorious One [*al-Jawād al-ʿAzīz*] will transform him and draw him near. Then He will accelerate his approach. Then He will slow him down. Then He will train him. Then He will converse with him in confidence. Then He will bestow His grace upon him in abundance. Then He will tighten His grip upon him.

"Wherever he happens to be, in every empty space, and in every circumstance, he will be close to his Lord, for he is held within His grasp, as one of those entrusted with His secrets, and with what he must convey from his Lord to His creatures. Once he has reached this stage, descriptions fail, and words and expressions are no longer adequate, for this is the farthest point accessible to minds and hearts, and the extreme limit attained by the spiritual states of the saints *[auliyā']*. Whatever exists beyond that is reserved for the Prophets *[Anbiyā']* and Messengers *[Rusul]* (peace be upon them all), because the final stage of the saint *[walī]* is the starting point of the Prophet *[Nabī]*. Upon all be the blessings of Allāh, His salutations, His gentle kindness and His merciful compassion!

"The difference between Prophethood *[Nubuwwa]* and sainthood *[wilāya]* is as follows: The rôle of the Prophet is to deliver speech *[kalām]* that emanates from Allāh (Exalted is He), and to receive and transmit revelation *[waḥy]*. This is accompanied by a Spirit *[Rūḥ]* from Allāh, for when He decrees the revelation *[waḥy]*, He stamps it with the seal of the Spirit. It is received from Him (Exalted is He), so it must be accepted. It is that which must be believed, and whoever rejects it is an unbeliever *[kāfir]*, because he is rejecting the Speech of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

"As for sainthood *[wilāya]*, it is the office of one to whom Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has entrusted His explanatory narrative *[ḥadīth]*, by way of inspiration *[ilhām]*. He conveys it to the saint, who is thereby charged with its transmission. That narrative *[ḥadīth]* emanates from Allāh on the tongue of the Truth *[Ḥaqq]*, accompanied by the state of pure serenity *[sakīna]*. It is thus received by the state of pure serenity *[sakīna]* within the heart of the ecstatic *[majdhūb]*, so he accepts it, and relies upon its veracity.

"The Speech [of Allāh] is therefore the prerogative of the Prophets *[Anbiyā']*, while the explanatory narrative *[ḥadīth]* is the prerogative of the saints *[auliyā']*. If someone rejects the Speech [of Allāh], he is an

"Then he recited again from the Qur'ān, and continued his recitation for a long time. Then he bowed down *[raka'a]* and maintained the bowing posture *[rukū']* for a long time. Then he raised his head. Then he prostrated himself *[sajada]*. Then he stood up straight, and went on to perform the second [cycle of prayer] in similar fashion. Then he said **(Allāh bless him and give him peace):**

> "'The sun and the moon are two of the signs of Allāh's *[āyatān min āyāti'llāh]* They do not become eclipsed on account of someone's death, nor on account of someone's birth. So, if you see that [eclipse] occurring, take refuge at once in the ritual prayer *[salāt]*.'"

* * *

Concerning (1) what is required of the beginner on this Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]*, at the very outset, (2) his conduct with the Shaikh, and (3) what is required of the Shaikh in training the seeker *[murīd]*.

What is required of the beginner on this Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]*, at the very outset, is the sound belief that constitutes its foundation. His belief must be based on the doctrine *['aqīda]* of our pious predecessors, the people of the ancient tradition, the Tradition *[Sunna]* of the Prophets *[Anbiyā']* and the Messengers *[Mursalīn]*, the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* and the Successors *[Tābi'īn]*, the saints *[awliyā']* and the champions of truth *[ṣiddīqīn]*, as we have mentioned and explained elsewhere in this book.

He must therefore adhere to the Book [of Allāh] and the Sunna, and observe them both in practice, root and branch, respecting every commandment and prohibition. He must make them his wings, with which to fly along the road that leads to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). Then he must practice truthfulness *[ṣidq]*, and then exercise good judgment *[ijtihād]*, until he finds the guidance *[hidāya]* and direction *[irshād]* he needs, and the signpost *[dalīl]*, and a leader *[qā'id]* to lead him. Then he must find a close friend *[mu'nis]*, who will keep him company. He must also find a refuge to which he can resort, when he is in a state of exhaustion, fatigue and gloom, due to the eruption of his carnal appetites and lusts, the foibles of his lower self *[nafs]*, his misleading passion, and his natural constitution, with its propensity to cowardice, and its reluctance to embark on traveling the road. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

As for those who strive in Our cause, surely We shall guide them to Our paths. (29:69)	*wa 'lladhīna jāhadū fī-nā* *la-nahdiyanna-hum* *subula-nā.*

As the wise man said: "He who seeks, and makes a serious effort, will surely find *[man ṭalaba wa jadda wajada]*."

Through firm belief *[iʿtiqād]*, he will obtain the knowledge of Reality *[ʿilm al-Ḥaqīqa]*, and through the exercise of good judgment *[ijtihād]*, he will acquire the attitude and conduct appropriate to Reality *[sulūk al-Ḥaqīqa]*. He will then be required to make a sincere covenant with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), promising that he will neither lift a foot, nor set one down, on the path toward Him, except because of Allāh, as long as he has not yet reached Allāh. He must not turn aside from his commitment, for any blameworthy purpose, because the truthful person *[ṣādiq]* never goes back on his promise. Even if he is offered a charismatic gift of grace *[karāma]*, along the way, he must not stop to accept it, as a substitute for Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), since it represents an obstacle to his progress toward his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He).

Once he has reached his destination, charismatic talents *[karāmāt]* will do him no harm, since they are automatically conferred at the gate of empowerment *[qudra]*, as the fruits and tokens thereof. This is not something that violates his integrity. How could it be, indeed, when he has now become an exemplary figure *[qudwa]* in the land, an extraordinary exception to the general rule *[kharq al-ʿāda]*? His speech has developed into wisdom *[hikma]*, in the wake of ignorance, barbarism *[ʿujma]*, stupidity and inaccuracy. His movements and his pauses, and all his ways of doing business, have come to be a model for those who take note of them. The actions of Allāh are at work within him and upon him, in ways that dazzle people's minds.

Having reached this stage, he will be commanded to seek charismatic grace *[karāma]*, and compelled to do so. He will be made to realize that his ruin and destruction lie in failing to seek it, and in refusing to obey this commandment. He will be made to realize that everything is contingent on his seeking it, and on his compliance with his Lord's command—his permanence, his survival, his worshipful service, his good work, the approval of his Lord and his closeness to Him, and increase in the loving affection bestowed upon him by his Lord. How can charismatic talent *[karāma]* do him any harm, now that he has this relationship with his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He)?

He must not reveal this special relationship to any of the common people [*ʿawāmm*], unless its disclosure is demanded of him irresistibly, because one of the conditions of sainthood [*walāya*] is the concealment of charismatic talents [*karāmāt*], whereas one of the conditions of Prophethood [*Nubuwwa*] is the manifestation of miracles [*muʿjizāt*].[4] It is incumbent upon him to emphasize this distinction between Prophethood [*Nubuwwa*] and sainthood [*walāya*].

He must not linger in neighborhoods where misconduct is rife, nor must he mingle with dissolute types and idle layabouts, the sons of tittle-tattle [*qīl wa qāl*], the enemies of good works and responsibilities, those who lay false claim to Islām and faith [*īmān*], those whom Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) was addressing when He said:

O you who believe, why do you say	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanū*
that which you do not do?	*li-ma taqūlūna mā lā tafʿalūn:*
It is most hateful in the sight of Allāh	*kabura maqtan ʿinda 'llāhi*
that you say what you do not do.	*an taqūlū mā lā tafʿalūn.*
(61:2)	
Will you bid other people	*a-taʾmurūna 'n-nāsa*
to righteousness, while you forget	*bi'l-birri*
[to practice it] yourselves?	*wa tansawna anfusa-kum*
And you are readers of the Book?	*wa antum tatlūna 'l-Kitāb:*
Have you no sense at all? (2:44)	*a-fa-lā taʿqilūn.*

He must not begrudge spending his available resources, nor must he be stingy with anything he has at his disposal, for fear that he may receive the same treatment, when it comes to the *ifṭār* [the fast-breaking meal] and the *saḥūr* [the last meal before daybreak in the month of Ramaḍān]. He must impress upon his lower self [*nafs*], and instill in his heart, an awareness of the fact that Allāh has never once created a saint [*walī*] of His, in all the times gone by, who was stingy about spending available resources.

He is obliged to be content with permanent humiliation, unfortunate deprivation, constant hunger, lack of recognition, criticism from other people, and seeing his peers, his counterparts and his contemporaries receive priority over him, in the bestowal of honors and gifts, and in the presence of the Shaikhs and the sessions of the scholars [*ʿulamāʾ*]. He must be ready to go hungry, while the others present eat their fill, and all of them enjoy respect. He must accept humiliation as his lot, while all the others bask in glory. He must actually prefer humiliation, and

[4] See n. 57 on p. 127 below.

regard it as his foreordained condition. If anyone is not content with this, and cannot reconcile himself to it, he is most unlikely to receive any benefit from it, since complete progress and success can only be achieved through what we have described.

He must not expect Allāh to grant him any request, apart from forgiveness for previous sins, pardon for disobedience in the times that lie ahead, and help *[taufīq]* in observing the hours that He loves, and in performing the good deeds that will bring him into His presence.

Such is the course he must follow, in order to obtain His approval in all his comings and goings, and to endear himself to those Shaikhs who are among the saints *[auliyā']* and the spiritual deputies *[abdāl]*, since that is his means of entry into the company of the beloved friends *[aḥbāb]*, the people endowed with faculties of reason and understanding *[dhawi 'l-'uqūl wa 'l-albāb]*, who have learned from the Lord of lords *[Rabb al-arbāb]*, who have recognized the warnings and the signs *[āyāt]*, and who have thus become pure in their hearts, their consciences and their intentions *[niyyāt]*.

The description we have given is that which fits the seeker *[murīd]*. As long as his heart is not absolutely clear of all wishes and desires, and purged of all the other factors we have mentioned, such as needs and demands, he cannot be a seeker *[murīd]* in the true sense of the term.

From their various degrees of progress, they were transported toward the Owner of Sovereignty [*Mālik al-Mulk*], for He arranged that process for them in His presence. Their secret conversation [*najwā*] came to be a face-to-face encounter [*kifāḥ*], in which they confided in Him with their hearts and their innermost beings [*asrār*]. They made Him the sole focus of their attention, to the exclusion of everything apart from Him. They were banned from their own persons, and from every single thing, for He is the Lord and Master of everything whatsoever. He kept them within his grasp, bound them to their rational faculties, and appointed them to be His trusted agents [*umanā'*].

They are therefore safe within His grasp, His protective custody and His guardianship. They savor the fragrant scent of nearness, and live their lives in the amplitude of the affirmation of Oneness [*tauḥīd*] and merciful compassion [*raḥma*], for they are not concerned with anything, apart from whatever actions He permits them to undertake.

When the time comes for their bodies to be active, rather than their hearts, they must proceed to act with caution, to avoid the harmful influences exerted by their devils [*shayāṭīn*], their lower selves [*nufūs*], and their passionate desires [*ahwiya*]. Their actions will then be rendered safe, by denying the devils a chance to exploit the foibles of their lower selves [*nufūs*], such as ostentation [*riyā'*], hypocrisy [*nifāq*], vain conceit [*'ujb*], the pursuit of worldly aims [*aghrāḍ*], the idolatrous worship [*shirk*] of some created thing, and reliance on human power and strength [*ḥawl wa quwwa*].

They must regard all that as a gracious favor from Allāh. They must see it as an opportunity created by Allāh, and acquired by them through His enabling grace [*taufīq*], so that they do not depart from the norms of right guidance [*sunan al-hudā*], after being confirmed in this belief [*'aqīda*]. Then, after fulfilling those commandments, and completing those undertakings, they will be returned to their spiritual stations, to which they have adhered in the meantime, and which they have maintained and preserved, with their hearts and their consciences.

Once they have been appointed trustees [*umanā'*], they may be assigned to a particular situation, and each of them will then be addressed individually, according to his situation.

You are today in Our presence, established and worthy of trust. (12:54)	*inna-ka 'l-yauma ladai-nā* *makīnun amīn.*

['isma], and zealous commitment *[hamiyya]*. He must not believe that he possesses impeccable virtue *['isma]*, and he must not tell anyone about this experience.

If he goes back to him later, on another day, or at another hour, he must do so in the firm belief that this is a thing of the past, and that the Shaikh has now been transported to a higher spiritual degree. He must be convinced that his previous condition was not permanent, but merely a temporary lapse, a minor incident, and an interlude between two spiritual states. There is always an interlude between two spiritual states, marked by a reversion to the special dispensations *[rukhas]* and permissive license *[ibāha]* of the sacred law *[shar']*, and by a respite from the strict interpretation *['azīma]* and its most rigorous application. This resembles the corridor between two houses, and the intermediate grade between two ranks. It signals an end to the first situation, and a step onto the threshold of the second situation, a transfer from one degree of sainthood *[wilāya]* to another, the discarding of the robe of honor of one degree of sainthood, and the donning of the robe of honor of another degree of sainthood, which is loftier and more noble. This is an ongoing process, because every day they experience an increase in closeness to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

If the Shaikh gets angry, and frowns in his face, or seems to be avoiding him, he must not sever his connection with him. He must rather scrutinize his own inner being *[bātin]*, and examine any misconduct in relation to the Shaikh, or negligence in relation to the commandment of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), such as failure to obey His commandment, and violation of His prohibition. He must first seek forgiveness from his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), turn to Him in repentance, and resolve to abstain from repeating his offense. Then he must apologize to the Shaikh, humble himself before him, treat him with affection, and endear himself to him by refraining from opposition to him in the future.

He must always be on good terms with his Shaikh, and persist in maintaining that relationship, for he has accepted him as a link and a mediator between himself and his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), and as a method and means by which to attain to Him. His situation resembles that of someone seeking admission to the presence of a king, with whom he has no personal familiarity. He has no alternative to approaching one of the king's chamberlains, or one of his courtiers and favorites, who can help him to understand the king's policy, practice and custom. From such an insider, he can learn how to behave in the king's presence, and how to address him. He can obtain all kinds of useful guidance, and acquire some curious bits of information, quite unlike anything in his existing store of knowledge, to which they will prove a valuable supplement, for he must enter the royal chamber through its proper door, and not climb in through some back passage. A wrong approach would expose him to blame and contempt, and defeat his aim and purpose in seeking an audience with the king.

Every newcomer [to the Spiritual Path] is bound to experience some bewilderment, so he needs to be treated with consideration and goodwill. He needs to have someone take him by the hand, and seat him in a place like his own, or at least beckon him to come and sit down, so that he does not feel unwelcome. He must not be greeted with bad manners and stupid behavior. He must be assured that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has caused it to be the normal state of affairs, on this earth, for there to be a Shaikh and a seeker *[murīd]*, an escort and one who is escorted, a follower and one who is followed, from the time of Adam till the advent of the Final Hour *[as-Sā'a]*.

Let us consider the case of Adam (peace be upon him). When Allāh (Exalted is He) created him, He taught him to recognize all things, and so He began the whole business with him, for He treated him like a pupil *[tilmīdh]* in the company of his master *[ustādh]*, and like a seeker *[murīd]* in the company of his Shaikh. "O Adam," He told him, "this is a horse, this is a mule, and this is a donkey...," until He had taught him to identify every jot and tittle.[5] Then, when He had taught him and trained him, He made him a master *[ustādh]*, a teacher *[mu'allim]*, a Shaikh and a wise man *[ḥakīm]*. He clothed him in all kinds of garments and adornments, and crowned him with a jeweled headband. He seated him on a pedestal in the Garden of Paradise, and stationed the angels around him in rows, then He said:

"O Adam, inform them of their names." (2:33)	*yā Ādamu anbi'-hum bi-asmā'i-him.*

—[meaning:] "now that their incompetence and their lack of knowledge have become apparent to you, and you have heard them say:

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[5] Literally, "a large bowl *[qaṣ'a]* and a small bowl *[quṣai'a]*."

'Glory be to You!	*subḥāna-ka*
We have no knowledge except that	*lā ʿilma la-nā*
which You have taught us.'" (2:32)	*illā mā ʿallamta-nā*

The angels thus became pupils *[talāmīdh]* to Adam, and Adam became their Shaikh, for he taught them the names of all things, in the manner to which the Qur'ān bears witness. His superior status (peace be upon him) was thereby made manifest, and so he became the most excellent and the noblest of them all, in the sight of Allāh and in their sight. He became their leader, and they became followers, guided by a leader (may Allāh's blessings be upon them all). But then, when it all happened—the eating from the tree, the expulsion from the Garden of Paradise, and the transition to another situation and another abode—it caught him unawares, and he was not yet equipped to understand it. That did not occur to his mind, and he did not imagine that it would happen to him.

Then, when Adam reached his new abode, and roamed about the earth, he found it strange and alarming. He experienced things there that he had never experienced before. He was made to suffer hunger and thirst, and scorching heat, and constriction, none of which he had previously encountered. He needed a teacher, a director, a master, a guide, a trainer, and an instructor, so Allāh (Exalted is He) sent Gabriel *[Jibrīl]* (peace be upon him), who befriended him, and helped him to understand what he found difficult about the situation. He gave him some wheat, and told him what to do with it, so he sowed it. Then he told him what to do next, so he harvested it. Then he told him what to do next, so he winnowed it, and ground it. He also prepared instruments for him to use. Then he told him to bake bread, so he baked it. Then he told him to eat, so he ate. Then, when the food was trying to leave his stomach, Adam was confused, and did not know what to do. He needed a teacher once again, so Gabriel taught him how to evacuate his bowels, how to clean himself, and how to serve Allāh (Exalted is He) in the situation. He taught him how to restore the white complexion to his body, the color of which had turned from white and fair to black and dark. He ordered him to fast on the white days *[al-ayyām al-bīḍ]*,[6] which occur on the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth of the month, and his color was thus restored to whiteness. He also taught him many other forms of knowledge *['ulūm]*, and various modes of good conduct *[ādāb]*.

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[6] According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, *al-ayyām al-bīḍ* [the white days]—like the even shorter expression *al-bīḍ* [the white ones]—is simply an abbreviated way of referring to *ayyām al-layālī 'l-bīḍ* [the days of the white nights]. They are so called because they are brightly illuminated throughout by the moon, which is then at or near the full. (For traditional reports on the subject, see Vol. 3, pp. 357–60.)

Adam (peace be upon him) thus became a pupil to Gabriel, and Gabriel (peace be upon him) became his master and his Shaikh, after Adam had been his Shaikh, and the Shaikh and leader of all the angels, and more knowledgeable than any of them. All that was due to the change in his spiritual state, and the transition from one situation to another.

The story then continues through the ages. Seth *[Shīth]*, the son of Adam, learned from his father, Adam, then his sons from him. The Prophet Noah *[Nūḥ an-Nabī]* (peace be upon him) likewise taught his sons, and Abraham *[Ibrāhīm]* (peace be upon him) taught his sons. Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

The same did Abraham enjoin upon his sons, and also Jacob. (2:132)	*wa waṣṣā bi-hā Ibrāhīmu banī-hi wa Ya'qūb.*

In other words, he instructed them and taught them.

Moses *[Mūsā]* and Aaron *[Hārūn]* (peace be upon them both) likewise taught their own sons, and all the children of Israel *[banī Isrā'īl]*. Jesus *['Īsā]* (peace be upon him) taught the Disciples *[Ḥawāriyyīn]*. Then Gabriel *[Jibrīl]* (peace be upon him) taught our Prophet [Muhammad] (Allāh bless him and give him peace) how to perform the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* and the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, and advised him to use the toothpick *[siwāk]*. As he once said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Gabriel (peace be upon him) advised me to use the toothpick *[siwāk]*, almost to the point of making it an obligatory religious duty. Gabriel (peace be upon him) led me in the performance of the ritual prayer *[ṣallā bī]*, beside the House [the House of Allāh, the Ka'ba], on two occasions. On the first occasion, he led me in the ritual prayer of noon *[ẓuhr]*, when the sun had declined from the meridian....

(We have previously quoted this tradition *[ḥadīth]* in full.)[7]

Then the Companions *[Ṣaḥāba]* (may Allāh be well pleased with them) learned from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), then the Successors *[Tābi'ūn]* learned from them, then the successors of the Successors *[tābi'u't-Tābi'īn]* learned from them, century after century, and epoch after epoch.

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[7] See Vol. 4, p. 114.

That could be the time it takes to perform four cycles of prayer [*rakaʿāt*], or it may only be enough for two cycles [*rakʿatain*].

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Two cycles of ritual prayer [*rakʿatain*], performed by the servant [of the Lord] in the middle of the night, are better than this world and all that it contains. But for the hardship it would have caused my Community [*Ummatī*], I would have made them obligatory.

All of this was intended to make it easy for his Community [*Umma*] to keep night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*] and to practice worshipful service [*ʿibāda*]. He did not wish it to be burdensome for them, and for worshipful service to be unpleasant for them, so that they would become weary and bored. Far from it! He simply steered them (Allāh bless him and give him peace) toward the keeping of night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], by mentioning its excellent merit and its spiritual reward, so that they would not confine themselves exclusively to the obligatory religious duties [*farāʾiḍ*] and established customary practices [*sunan*].[57]

For the keeping of vigil, one third is the fraction of the night that is most strongly recommended, while the least recommended is one sixth. This is because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never once kept vigil throughout the whole of a night until morning. He would always take some sleep in the course of it. Nor did he ever sleep throughout the whole of a night until morning. He would always keep vigil during some part of it, as we have explained.

It has been said that the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] of the first part of the night is for those who observe *tahajjud*;[58] the vigil [*qiyām*] kept in the middle part of it is for the humbly devout [*qānitīn*]; the vigil kept in the last part of it is for worshippers devoted to the ritual prayer [*muṣallīn*]; and the vigil kept at the break of dawn [*qiyām al-fajr*] is for the heedless.

Yūsuf ibn Mihrān (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "Beneath the Heavenly Throne [*ʿArsh*], as I have been informed, there is an angel in the shape of a rooster [*dīk*]. Its talons are of pearl and its spurs of green topaz. When the first third of

saints *[auliyā']* (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them all), so the possibility is undeniable.

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[57] The term *sunna* (of which *sunan* is the plural form) may be applied to a particular practice recommended by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as well as to his exemplary conduct in general. Although there are no capital letters in the Arabic script, it is convenient to mark the distinction, in transliteration, between the specific *sunna*/*sunan* and the general *Sunna*.

[58] See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

The fact remains, nevertheless, that what we have described is by far the most probable and most frequent scenario, and the safest and best course to pursue. This means that the seeker should not part company with the Shaikh, until, through attaining to his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), he achieves independence from him. From that point on, He (Blessed and Exalted is He) will take charge of his education and his training, and He will enable him to grasp the meanings of things that were hidden from the Shaikh. He will put him to work in whatever undertakings He may wish. He will tell him what he must do, and what he must not do. He will sometimes treat him expansively, and sometimes subject him to constriction. He will sometimes enrich him, and sometimes make him experience poverty. He will instruct him, and make him aware of his allotted portions *[aqsām]*, and of what will eventually become of his business.

He will thus be dependent on his Lord, and independent of all others. Indeed, he will have no time to spare for anyone else. It will be impossible for him to attend to anything, except his duty and service to his Lord, and the preservation of his respectful and reverent demeanor toward Him. Once he has reached this stage, he will be completely cut off from the Shaikh. He may even be forbidden to contact the Shaikh, unless he receives a clear and explicit instruction to do so, or unless the Shaikh happens to approach him, or he meets him on the road, or in a congregational mosque *[jāmi']*, by a decree of destiny *[qadar]*, not by deliberate intent.

The purpose of all that is to keep the spiritual state intact. It is necessary to maintain absolute dependence on the Lord, the zealous preservation of the spiritual state, and constant adherence thereto. It is also a precaution against lapsing into error, and suffering the punishment that would ensue.

The main point here is that the rule of conduct *[hukm]* applies to both the seeker *[murīd]* and the Shaikh, and embraces them both, whereas the spiritual states *[ahwāl]* distinguish between them, because those states are decreed by destiny *[qadar]*, and destiny is mysterious *[ghaib]*, for it is the action of the Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He). Every day, Allāh (Exalted is He) is about some awesome business, involving advancement and postponement, substitution and alteration, appointment and dismissal, enrichment and impoverishment, ennoblement and abasement, as He brings the decrees of destiny *[maqādīr]* to their appointed times *[mawāqīt]*. None of that is within the comprehension or control of any of His creatures. It is a dark night, a fathomless ocean, and a vast continent. No part of it is accessible to anyone but Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and those whom Allāh (Exalted is He) has made privy to it, they being His Messengers *[Rusul]*, His Prophets *[Anbiyā']*, and the chosen few among His saints *[auliyā']*.

This means that two of the saints *[auliyā']* will not find themselves on the same path, after each has embarked on the one assigned by destiny *[qadar]* and the action [of the Lord]. So what has the seeker *[murīd]* to do with the Shaikh, once their paths are different? The Shaikh will be moved in one direction, and the seeker *[murīd]* in another, so their backs and their faces will be at odds. What chance is there, then, of companionship, togetherness, and harmony between them? That is very unlikely indeed. If it ever does occur, it is extremely rare and extraordinary, so it need not be considered or treated as a serious possibility, since the most probable scenario is that which is obvious, plainly visible, and clearly apparent.

May Allāh's blessings therefore be upon the Shaikh, and upon the truthful seeker *[al-murīd as-sādiq]*, who has attained, with his help, to a spiritual state in which he depends entirely on his Lord (Blessed and Exalted is He), and has nothing more to do with the Shaikh, except when the time is right.

More concerning the proper conduct *[adab]* of the seeker *[murīd]* in relation to the Shaikh.

He must not talk in the presence of his Shaikh, except in a case of emergency, and he must not draw attention to any of his personal virtues and exploits *[manāqib]* in his presence.

He must not spread his prayer rug *[sajjāda]* in front of the Shaikh, except at the time of performing the ritual prayer *[salāt]*. Then, as soon as he has completed his ritual prayer, he must roll up his prayer rug immediately, and be ready to serve his Shaikh. If someone remains seated on his carpet *[bisāt]*, comfortably ensconced and relaxed, he is under no such obligation to others, for this is the state of the Shaikhs, not the state of the seekers *[murīdīn]*.

He must try to avoid spreading his prayer rug on top of the rug of someone who is above him in rank, or even setting it close to that person's rug, except at his command, for that is considered bad manners in such company.

If some question is raised in the presence of the Shaikh, the seeker *[murīd]* is obliged to remain silent, even if he feels sure that he could provide a satisfactory answer to it. He must rather seize the opportunity to hear what Allāh may reveal *[yaftahu]* on the tongue of his Shaikh, and then accept it and put it into practice. Even if he detects some inadequacy or deficiency in the Shaikh's answer, he must not object to it. He must rather give thanks to Allāh (Exalted is He) for the special grace, knowledge and light that He has conferred upon his Shaikh, and keep all those other thoughts and feelings concealed within himself.

He must not do a lot of talking, and he certainly must not say: "The Shaikh is mistaken on that point." He must never contradict what the Shaikh has to say, unless he is irresistibly compelled to do so, and the words simply pop out of his mouth. If that should happen, he must make amends for it at once, through silence, repentance, and a

According to Ibrāhīm an-Nakha'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "The 'numbered days *[al-ayyām al-ma'dūdāt]*' are the Ten Days [of Dhu'l-Ḥijja], while the 'days appointed *[al-ayyām al-ma'lūmāt]*' are the Days of Immolation *[Ayyām an-Naḥr]*."

As for the context in which Allāh (Exalted is He) commanded the Muslims to practice remembrance *[dhikr]*, in this Qur'ānic verse *[āya]* (2:203) and the one preceding it, in which He said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And when you have performed	*fa-idhā qaḍaitum manāsika-kum*
your holy rites, remember Allāh,	*fa-'dhkurū 'llāha*
as you remember your fathers	*ka-dhikri-kum*
or with a more intense remembrance.	*ābā'a-kum au ashadda dhikrā.*
(2:200)	

—the traditional commentators *[mufassirūn]* have provided the following background information: When the [pre-Islāmic] Arabs had completed their Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]*, they used to stand by the House *[Bait]* and remember the exploits of their fathers and their glorious deeds. A man might say: "My father would always receive his guest with warm hospitality. He would always provide good food. He would sacrifice a camel fit for slaughter, and shear the forelocks [of other animals]. He would do such-and-such, and such-and-such." They used to compete with one another in making such boastful claims, so Allāh (Exalted is He) commanded His remembrance. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) sent down the revelation:

And when you have performed	*fa-idhā qaḍaitum manāsika-kum*
your holy rites, remember Allāh,	*fa-'dhkurū 'llāha*
as you remember your fathers	*ka-dhikri-kum*
or with a more intense remembrance.	*ābā'a-kum au ashadda dhikrā.*
(2:200)	

—and so on, through to His words (Exalted is He):

And remember Allāh	*wa 'dhkurū 'llāha*
during certain numbered days.	*fī ayyāmin ma'dūdāt*
(2:203)	

He also said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

"So remember Me (2:152)	*fa-'dhkurū-nī*

—for I am the One who made that possible for your fathers, and for you. I am the One who treated them and you so well."

from the Speech *[Kalām]* of the One who is Sought *[Murād]* by him, and the Tradition *[Ḥadīth]* of the One who is his Lord *[Rabb]* (Almighty and Glorious is He). This gives him an excellent alternative to the poems, the songs, the tunes, and the noisy clamor of the pretenders, the partners of the devils, the riders of passionate desires, the steeds of their own lower selves *[nufūs]* and natural instincts, the followers of every shouter and screamer.

The seeker *[murīd]* is obliged to refrain from disputing with anyone during the spiritual concert *[samā‘]*. While it is in progress, he must refrain from pressing anyone to importune the chanter, the one who recites those pious and eloquent verses, which arouse longing for the Gardens of Paradise, the heavenly brides *[ḥūr]*, and the vision of the Lord of Truth (Exalted is He) in the hereafter, while inspiring abstinence from this world, its lustful pleasures and its carnal appetites, its sons and its women, and encouraging the patient endurance of its misfortunes, its trials and its tribulations, its rejection of the sons of the hereafter, and its devotion to its own sons, and so on.

He must entrust all that to the Shaikh in attendance, for the people present are in the Shaikh's care, unless at that moment—O Allāh *[Allāhumma]*!—the listener is one of those who are specially entitled *[mustaḥiqqīn]*. He must therefore observe well-mannered behavior on the surface, while inwardly disowning his affectation, for there can be no doubt that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will either appoint someone to importune on his behalf, or inspire the chanter to repeat his recitation, again and again, so that the truthful listener can accomplish his eager wish and desire.

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Still more concerning the proper conduct *[adab]* of the seeker *[murīd]* in relation to the Shaikh.

If the seeker *[murīd]* wishes to receive training from a Shaikh, he must have a faith *[īmān]*, a belief *[taṣdīq]*, and a firm conviction *[iʿtiqād]* that there is no one better qualified than he, in all the neighboring districts, to help him fulfill his aspiration. He must feel sure that the Shaikh will accept him for the sake of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and that his innermost being *[sirr]* will be safe with Allāh (Exalted is He), when he enters the Shaikh's service, and commits his search *[irāda]* to his care, by becoming his pupil. He must feel sure that nothing will be uttered by the tongue of his Shaikh, except that which is in his best interest.

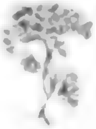
He must be very careful not to contradict him, because opposition to the Shaikhs is a deadly poison, and its harmfulness is far-reaching. He must not disagree with him in explicit terms, nor by implication.

He must make every effort to avoid concealing anything from his Shaikh, in connection with his spiritual states and secrets, and he must not tell anyone else about the instructions he receives from his Shaikh.

He must not resort to applying for concessions *[rukhaṣ]*, or revert to something he has abandoned for the sake of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), for that is one of the major offenses *[kabāʾir]*, and it amounts to the cancellation of the search *[irāda]*, according to the people of the Spritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]*. Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

> The person who goes back on his gift is like the dog that vomits, then goes back and licks it up.

The seeker *[murīd]* is obliged to practice strict adherence to the instructions he receives from his Shaikh, in order to ensure that his training is effective in correcting his bad behavior. If he is guilty of any shortcoming in the performance of his Shaikh's directions, he is obliged to inform his Shaikh about it, so that he can advise him accordingly, and pray for him to be granted the blessings of enabling grace *[tawfīq]*, facilitation *[taisīr]* and success *[falāh]*.



Concerning what is required of the Shaikh in the process of training the seeker *[murīd]*.

As for what is required of the Shaikh, in the process of training the seeker *[murīd]*, he must first of all accept him [as his pupil] for the sake of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), not for his own sake. Then he must relate to him on the basis of sincere advice *[naṣīḥa]*, and regard him with the eye of tender loving care.

He must treat his pupil with gentle kindness, when he finds it hard to cope with rigorous exercise *[riyāḍa]*, for he must train him as a mother trains her child, and as a gentle, wise and understanding father trains his son and his servant. He must therefore set him fairly easy tasks, and not burden him beyond his capacity, until he is ready for more difficult tests.

He must start by commanding him to refrain, in all his affairs, from obeying the dictates of his instinctual nature, and to practice the special dispensations *[rukhaṣ]* of the sacred law *[shar']*, until he is thereby delivered from the control and domination of his natural instincts, and comes to accept the control and bondage of the sacred law *[shar']*. The Shaikh must then transfer him from the special dispensations *[rukhaṣ]* to the strict application *['azīma]*, one thing at a time, by erasing one practice from the category of dispensations, and replacing it with a practice from the category of strict application.

If he detects in his pupil, at the very outset, a genuine capacity for strenuous exertion *[mujāhada]* and adherence to the strict application of the law *['azīma]*, and if he perceives that quality in him by the light of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), through revealed insight, and understanding conferred by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), in accordance with what has always been the custom *[sunna]* of Allāh in dealing with His believing servants, such as the saints *[auliyā']*, the beloved friends *[aḥbāb]*, the trusted agents *[umanā']*, and those well versed in knowledge of Him *[al-'ulamā' bi-hi]*—in a case like this, the

Shaikh is not required to treat him in the indulgent manner described above.

If the pupil fits this description, the Shaikh must set him the most difficult exercises *[riyāḍāt]*, knowing that he does not lack the strength of purpose they demand, since he is convinced that he was created for that kind of training, that he is worthy of it, and that it is what he really needs. He must not cheat him by treating him too lightly.

The Shaikh must not take advantage of the seeker *[murīd]*, under any circumstance, by profiting from his wealth or his service. Nor must he expect any recompense from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), or anything at all, in exchange for the training he provides. His only motive for training and educating him must be compliance with Allāh's will (Almighty and Glorious is He), by carrying out His commandment, and accepting the pupil as a special present and unusual gift from Him. For the seeker *[murīd]* is one who has come, not through any process of selection or procurement initiated by the Shaikh, but by a pure decree of destiny *[qadar maḥḍ]*, through the direction *[irshād]*, guidance *[hidāya]* and saving grace *[inqādh]* bestowed upon him by Allāh (Exalted is He). He is therefore a present from Allāh, and the Shaikh must accept him and treat him well, by giving him an excellent course of training and education.

It would therefore be wrong for the Shaikh to take advantage of him, or profit from his wealth, except at Allāh's command (Exalted is He). He must employ him for good purposes, and accept what the seeker brings with him, of the wealth that Allāh (Exalted is He) has provided for his well-being and safe passage, and of which He has allotted a portion to the Shaikh, for he then has no cause to refuse and reject it.

He must be very wary of trying to choose what the seeker *[murīd]* ought to experience. He must leave that to the action of Allāh, and His decree *[qadar]*, for it was Allāh (Exalted is He) who brought the seeker to him, without any effort on his part, without selection by his heart, and without his personal interest being involved. He will then be assisted and guided in training him, and the seeker's progress and success will be accelerated. The Shaikh must therefore be on guard, to ensure that his personal desire does not become involved, for then he would lose the enabling guidance *[taufīq]*, along with the protection he enjoys in relation to the seeker *[murīd]*.

It is incumbent upon the Shaikh to train him through his spiritual influence *[himma]*, and to repent on his behalf, in his innermost being *[sirr]*, if he discovers any fault or weakness in him. It is also incumbent upon him to keep the inner condition of the seekers *[murīdīn]* a secret to himself, so he must not share with anyone else the insight he has obtained through observing their spiritual states, whether by means of an esoteric faculty of knowledge *['ilm ladunī]*, a talent conferred by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), or by means of a private disclosure, a confidence imparted to him by the seeker. When he is told something in confidence, he must not divulge it to anyone else, because it is a deposit entrusted to his safekeeping. As the saying goes: "The breasts of free men are the tombs of secrets *[ṣudūr al-aḥrār qubūr al-asrār]*."

The Shaikh must be a place of comfort for the seekers *[murīdīn]*, and a storeroom and vault for their secrets. He must serve as a refuge for them, and a cave. He must be a source of encouragement, strength and assistance, and someone who keeps them firmly on the path. He must not scare them away from the path, their mutual fellowship, and their commitment to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

If he notices that the seeker *[murīd]* is guilty of something reprehensible, in terms of the sacred law *[shar']*, the Shaikh must admonish him in private, and correct his behavior. He must forbid him to repeat that offense, whether it be a violation of the roots and branches [of the sacred law], or a pretentious claim to a spiritual state he does not possess, or a vain conceit with regard to his deeds and his power of perception. The Shaikh must save him from the pitfall of vain conceit, and belittle his deeds and states in his eyes, so that he does not perish, for arrogant pride will cause the servant to fall from the gracious sight of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

If the Shaikh wishes to deliver the admonition to the whole community *[jamā'a]*, he must assemble them and address them in these words: "It has come to my attention that there is someone, in your midst, who lays false claim to such-and-such, and says such-and-such, and is guilty of such-and-such." He must then go on to describe what is at stake, in terms of the corrupting effects [of such behavior], and the beneficial results [of abstaining from it]. He must remind them of the dangers, and put them on their guard.

In delivering this admonition, however, he must not identify any specific individual amongst them, as being the guilty culprit, because of the inherent risk of causing alienation. If he behaves and speaks in a boorish manner, divulges their secrets, slanders them, strips them down, and mentions all their bad sides, their hearts will feel an aversion to approaching him and keeping him company.

That will cause them to adopt a suspicious attitude toward the people of the Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]*, and toward the seed of the saints *[awliyā']* of Allāh (Exalted is He), that had been planted in their hearts. The Shaikh must therefore be very wary of such behavior. If it comes upon him irresistibly, and he cannot control it, he must dismiss himself from the office of Shaikh, and resign from his saintly position of authority *[wilāya]*. He must isolate himself from the seekers *[murīdīn]*, concentrate on the struggle with his own lower self *[nafs]* and its rigorous exercise, and look for a Shaikh who will educate him, correct him, and put him through a strict course of training. It is utterly useless for him to be a Shaikh, while accompanied by all these calamities, so he must not interrupt the progress of the seekers *[murīdīn]* on their Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]* toward Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

❦

On the cultivation of sideburns by men; on the removal of facial hair with tweezers.

It is considered reprehensible for men—although it is not improper for women—to practice the cultivation of sideburns *[taḥdhīf]*, which means letting the hair between the cheek and the temples grow long, as is now the custom of the ʿAlawiyyūn.[10]

We know that ʿAlī himself (may Allāh the Exalted ennoble his countenance) disapproved of it, because of the report handed down from him, with full chain of transmission *[isnād]*, by Abū Bakr al-Khallāl, one of our masters [of the Ḥanbalī school].[11]

Al-Walīd ibn Muslim is reported as having said: "I got to know those people really well, and this was not part of their custom."

As for removing hair from the face by means of tweezers *[minqāsh]*, this is considered reprehensible for both men and women, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) cursed those women who practice the method of depilation called *tanammuṣ*, which means plucking hair from the face with tweezers. This was mentioned by Abū ʿUbaida.

Where a woman is concerned, it is regarded as improper for her to use glass *[zujāj]* or a razor *[mūsā]* to depilate her forehead, or to remove her facial hair, because of the prohibition of this already mentioned.

It has been maintained, however, that this is in fact permissible for her, though only in the specific case where she does it to please her own husband, because he expects it of her and she has reason to be afraid that, if she fails to do it, he is likely to abandon her and marry another woman. Since this would have unfortunate and painful consequences for her, she may be permitted to practice that kind of depilation on the grounds of beneficial advantage *[maṣlaḥa]*, just as it is considered

[10] The ʿAlawiyyūn claim to be descendants of Imām ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

[11] Abū Bakr al-Khallāl (d. A.H. 311/923–4 C.E.) was responsible for compiling and systematizing the legal teachings of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may the mercy of Allāh be upon him).

dissipates. If it still persists, he must treat him in an even friendlier and more engaging manner, until it finally evaporates. If he finds his own heart affected by a sense of alienation from one of them, and by a feeling of annoyance, due to backbiting *[ghiba]* or some other cause, he must not let that show from himself, but rather present the opposite appearance.

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2.
Concerning fellowship with strangers *[aṣ-ṣuḥba maʿa 'l-ajānib]*.

When it comes to fellowship with strangers, the spiritual seeker must keep his innermost being *[sirr]* secret from them. He must regard them with the eye of kindness and compassion, and see to it that their goods are delivered to them safely. He must keep the rules of the Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]* out of their sight. He must be patient with their bad habits, and refrain from close association with them, as far as he can.

He must not attribute to himself a degree of virtue superior to theirs. Speaking of them, he must say: "They are among the people who enjoy immunity *[ahl as-salāma]*, so Allāh will let them pass unchallenged." Speaking to himself, on the other hand, he must say: "You are one of those who are subject to strict review *[ahl al-muḍāyaqa]*, so you will be held responsible for the slightest snap of the fingers *[naqīr]* and the merest trifle *[qiṭmīr]*, for both the small change and the major sum. You will be called to account, not only for matters of great importance, but also for minor details."

Allāh (Exalted is He) overlooks certain things in the case of the ignorant person, but He does not overlook those same things in the case of someone endowed with knowledge. He takes little notice of the common folk *[ʿawāmm]*, but the special few *[khawāṣṣ]* are in grave jeopardy.

3.

Concerning fellowship with the rich *[aṣ-ṣuḥba maʿa ʾl-aghniyāʾ].*

As for fellowship *[ṣuḥba]* with the rich, you must relate to them with an attitude of dignified detachment, free from greedy ambition, and nursing no hope of acquiring what they have at their disposal. You must keep all such people outside of your heart, and preserve your religious commitment *[dīn]* from the damage caused by fawning upon them to win their favor. As we learn from the tradition *[ḥadīth]*, it was the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who said:

> When someone fawns upon a rich man, because of what he has at his disposal, two thirds of his religion *[dīn]* are gone.

Let us therefore take refuge with Allāh, from any action that diminishes our religious commitment! As indicated by the tradition *[ḥadīth]*, you must shun the fellowship of those types of people, whose influence is detrimental to religion *[dīn]* and tends to sever its binding ties, and whose possessions and worldly interests may be dazzling enough to extinguish the light of faith *[īmān]*. There may be occasions, of course, when their fellowship *[ṣuḥba]* is unavoidably inflicted upon you, in the course of a journey or an expedition, or in the congregational setting of a mosque *[masjid]* or a guesthouse *[ribāṭ]*. In situations like these, your behavior should conform to the best standard of conventional conduct.

This is a general rule, applicable to fellowship *[ṣuḥba]* with the rich and the poor alike, for you must not attribute to yourself a degree of virtue superior to theirs. On the contrary, you must be firmly convinced that all your fellow creatures are better than you, in order to avoid the pitfall of arrogant pride. You must not claim the special merit of poverty for your own self *[nafs]*, nor attribute any great importance to it, either in this world or in the hereafter. You must not see it as having any value or weight, for, as the saying goes: "If someone ascribes any value to his own self, he has no value, and if he ascribes any weight to it, he carries no weight."

In the case of the rich man *[ghanī]*, proper conduct *[adab]* is a matter of treating the poor man well, which means taking money out of his purse and handing it over to him. He must be detached from his wealth, dealing with it in the capacity of a custodian *[mustakhlaf]*, rather than that of a proprietor *[mutamallik]*.

In the case of the poor man *[faqīr]*, proper conduct *[adab]* is a matter of keeping the rich man out of his heart, which means that his heart must be detached from the rich man and his wealth, and indeed, from this world and the hereafter altogether. He must not provide a home or a lodging in his heart, nor an entrance thereto, for anything whatsoever. It must become absolutely pure and empty of all of that. Then he must watch and wait for it to be filled by his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), so that nothing but He has any presence, and nothing else can exert any power or strength. Once that has been accomplished, he will receive the gracious favor of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and he will then obtain wealth through Him (Almighty and Glorious is He), without weary labor and anxious concern.

Shaikh is not required to treat him in the indulgent manner described above.

If the pupil fits this description, the Shaikh must set him the most difficult exercises *[riyāḍāt]*, knowing that he does not lack the strength of purpose they demand, since he is convinced that he was created for that kind of training, that he is worthy of it, and that it is what he really needs. He must not cheat him by treating him too lightly.

The Shaikh must not take advantage of the seeker *[murīd]*, under any circumstance, by profiting from his wealth or his service. Nor must he expect any recompense from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), or anything at all, in exchange for the training he provides. His only motive for training and educating him must be compliance with Allāh's will (Almighty and Glorious is He), by carrying out His commandment, and accepting the pupil as a special present and unusual gift from Him. For the seeker *[murīd]* is one who has come, not through any process of selection or procurement initiated by the Shaikh, but by a pure decree of destiny *[qadar maḥḍ]*, through the direction *[irshād]*, guidance *[hidāya]* and saving grace *[inqādh]* bestowed upon him by Allāh (Exalted is He). He is therefore a present from Allāh, and the Shaikh must accept him and treat him well, by giving him an excellent course of training and education.

It would therefore be wrong for the Shaikh to take advantage of him, or profit from his wealth, except at Allāh's command (Exalted is He). He must employ him for good purposes, and accept what the seeker brings with him, of the wealth that Allāh (Exalted is He) has provided for his well-being and safe passage, and of which He has allotted a portion to the Shaikh, for he then has no cause to refuse and reject it.

He must be very wary of trying to choose what the seeker *[murīd]* ought to experience. He must leave that to the action of Allāh, and His decree *[qadar]*, for it was Allāh (Exalted is He) who brought the seeker to him, without any effort on his part, without selection by his heart, and without his personal interest being involved. He will then be assisted and guided in training him, and the seeker's progress and success will be accelerated. The Shaikh must therefore be on guard, to ensure that his personal desire does not become involved, for then he would lose the enabling guidance *[taufīq]*, along with the protection he enjoys in relation to the seeker *[murīd]*.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> A person does not believe in the Qur'ān, if he treats as lawful the things it has declared unlawful.

You must therefore remember that, when someone accepts a gift from you, the benefit is the recipient's, not yours.

The following refinements of behavior [*ādāb*] must all be cultivated in fellowship with the poor [*ṣuḥba ma'a 'l-fuqarā'*]:

- You should not make it necessary for them to ask you for anything they need. If it happens nevertheless, and the pauper [*faqīr*] asks you for something in the form of a loan, you should lend it to him in the outer sense [*ẓāhir*]. Then, in your inner feeling [*bāṭin*], you should absolve him from the obligation to repay. You should let him know about this as soon as possible, but without making him think that the gift comes with invisible strings, so that he will not carry the embarrassing feeling that you have done him a favor.
- It is important to respect the feelings of his heart, by supplying what he needs immediately, instead of giving him a hard time by keeping him waiting, because the pauper is the son of his present moment [*ibn waqti-hi*]. In the words of the traditional saying: "The son of Adam is the son of his present day, and he has no time to spend on waiting for the future."
- If you are well aware that he has dependents and young children to care for, you must not devote all your kind attention to him personally, as if he were a separate individual. You must rather extend your kindness to include his broader situation, and the people with whom his heart is preoccupied.
- You must listen with patience [*ṣabr*] while the pauper tells you about his situation. While he talks to you about it, you must let him see a cheerful, welcoming expression on your face. You must not scowl or frown at him, nor utter a word that might discourage him. If he asks you for something that is unavailable at the time, you must wear a pleasant expression, as you direct him to whatever assistance may exist within the realm of possibility. You must not reduce him to despair, by dismissing him abruptly, in case he goes away with a sense of futility, feeling that it was pointless to present his need to you, and regretting the fact that he divulged his secret to you, all to no avail.

This could have serious consequences, in that his primitive instincts might overwhelm him, and his lower self *[nafs]* might seize control of him. If that should happen, he might yield to outright foolishness, not only hating you, but remonstrating with the Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), and protesting that, while He consigned him to dependence on other creatures, He treated them with excessive generosity. His heart would thus become blind, and the light of his faith would be extinguished. You would then be to blame for all of that, since you were a cause of that commotion in his heart, through a lack of good manners in the way you dismissed him.

He might also be cut off from the spiritual reward, the insights, the lessons, and all the other benefits that are concealed within his begging from fellow creatures. If he had persevered with patience, and persisted in good behavior, those hidden benefits would have become apparent. The need to beg from his fellow creatures would then have departed, and he would have obtained the riches of the hand, the heart and the home. The troops of Allāh's bounty would then have come to him, along with His blessings and His gracious favor. He would have been guided by the hand of gentle kindness, compassion, comfort and safekeeping. He would have become a living proof of His assertion (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And He befriends and protects the righteous. (7:196)	*wa Huwa* *yatawallā 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn*.

He would have been protected and jealously safeguarded. He would have been independent of things, because of their Creator. Things would have come to him, and he would not have gone looking for things. When visitors called to see him, they would have been touched by his radiant vibrations and his innermost being *[sirr]*, and improved by his goodness, though he would have been quite unaware of their presence. He would have been in a state of absence *[ghaib]* from them, wholly preoccupied with his Master *[Maulā]* and the force of attraction *[jādhib]* that drew him toward Him, saving him from the gloom and darkness of mingling with creatures, complying with the dictates of the lower self *[nafs]*, following the passions, and being subject to the will of things, both worldly and otherworldly.

See, those who are worthy	*inna aṣḥāba 'l-jannati 'l-yawma*
of the Garden [of Paradise]	*fī shughulin*
are busy this day in their rejoicing.	*fākihūn.*
(36:55)	

They became the people of the Garden of Paradise, because, here in this world, they sold their persons and their goods to their Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), in exchange for the Garden of Paradise. As He has told us (Glorious is and Exalted is He):

Allāh has bought from the believers	*inna 'llāha 'shtarā*
their persons and their goods,	*mina 'l-mu'minīna anfusa-hum*
the Garden [of Paradise] being theirs	*wa amwāla-hum*
for the price. (9:111)	*bi-anna la-humu 'l-janna.*

They patiently endured the pain of bankruptcy *[iflās]* in this world, and transferred the management of their persons, their goods, and their children, to their Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He). They surrendered everything to His direct control (Magnificent is His Majesty), apart from [their responsibility to observe] the commandments and prohibitions [of the sacred law]. They obeyed the commandments, and observed the prohibitions, while they surrendered in the face of destiny's decree *[maqdūr]*. They viewed the created universe with wary circumspection, and kept themselves detached from the will, from desires, and from ambitious tendencies in general.

He therefore caused them to enter the Garden of Paradise, and kept them occupied with that which no eye has ever seen, of which no ear has ever heard, and the very notion of which has never occurred to the human heart. As He has told us (Glorious is and Exalted is He):

See, those who are worthy	*inna aṣḥāba 'l-jannati 'l-yawma*
of the Garden [of Paradise]	*fī shughulin*
are busy this day in their rejoicing.	*fākihūn.*
(36:55)	

If the pauper *[faqīr]* does all that in this world, he will likewise be entitled to the Garden of Paradise, as the Qur'ān clearly states. He must then sell the Garden of Paradise immediately, in exchange for his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), and seek "the neighbor *[jār]* before the house *[dār]*." He will thus be following the advice of Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon her),[12] for it was she

[12] Rābi'a bint Ismā'īl al-'Adawiyya (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon her) was sold into slavery as a child. She later settled in Basra, where she attained great renown as a remarkable saint and effective preacher. Devoted to loving intimacy with Allāh (Exalted is He), she never married. The date of her death is given as A.H. 135/752 C.E. by some authorities, while others assign it to the year A.H. 185/801 C.E. (See also Vol. 2, p. 178.)

who coined the expression: "The neighbor before the house *[al-jār qabla 'd-dār]*." As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us [in the Qur'ān]:

They seek His countenance. (6:52)	*yurīdūna wajha-h*

—and as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said in one of His earlier Books of Scripture *[Kutub]*:

> Of those who are dear to Me, the dearest of all is a servant who worships Me without expecting any favor, but only to give Lordship *[Rubūbiyya]* its due.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> If Allāh (Exalted is He) had not created the Garden of Paradise and the Fire of Hell, nobody would have worshipped Him.

It was 'Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "If Allāh (Exalted is He) had created neither the Garden of Paradise nor the Fire of Hell, He would not have been One who deserves *[ahl]* to be worshipped."

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said [of Himself]:

He is Worthy of true devotion, and Qualified to grant forgiveness. (74:56)	*Huwa ahlu 't-taqwā* *wa ahlu 'l-maghfira.*

Well then, if the pauper *[faqīr]* fits the description outlined above—so that he is truly bankrupt of everything apart from his Master *[Maulā]*, and his heart has been cleansed of dependence on things, and he has ceased to exist as far as they are concerned, and he has really become a seeker *[murīd]*, and he is absent from everything apart from his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He)—it will be incumbent upon the noble nature of Allāh to befriend and protect him, to guide him, and to treat him with gracious favor, in this world until the time of the Rendezvous *[Liqā']*.

Then He will grant him even more than that. He will bestow new favors upon him, including robes of honor of various kinds, radiant lights, comfort and ease, the good life, and nearness to what He has prepared for His saints *[auliyā']* and his beloved friends *[ahbāb]*, as He has hinted in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

So no soul knows what comfort is kept secretly in store for them,	*fa-lā ta'lamu nafsun* *mā ukhfiya la-hum*

as a reward	*min qurrati a'yun:*
for what they used to do. (32:17)	*jazā'an bi-mā kānū ya'malūn.*

There is also the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) says: "I have prepared for My righteous servants that which no eye has ever seen, of which no ear has ever heard, and the very notion of which has never occurred to the human heart."

Whenever Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) heard this, he used to say: "Recite, if you wish, the Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*:

So no soul knows what comfort	*fa-lā ta'lamu nafsun*
is kept secretly in store for them,	*mā ukhfiya la-hum*
as a reward	*min qurrati a'yun:*
for what they used to do. (32:17)"	*jazā'an bi-mā kānū ya'malūn.*

Allāh will punish you, if you turn away the pauper, who, though empty-handed, is rich at heart, and who is carrying out the order of his Master *[Maulā]* in telling you about his condition, for the sake of his dependents or for his own sake—obedient to his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) in doing that, and afraid of displeasing Him—and who did not refrain from begging from you, since Allāh charged him with that task, and imposed it on him as a test. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

And We have appointed some of you	*wa ja'alnā ba'da-kum*
a test for others:	*li-ba'din fitna:*
Will you be steadfast? (25:20)	*a-taṣbirūn*

This is not a permanent condition. It will actually end quite soon, and the pauper will be transported to the lasting wealth and honor that has been allotted to him, in the nearness of his Master *[Maulā]*.

Allāh will punish you, O you who are wealthy-handed, but poor at heart, ignorant of both yourself and your Lord, of both your starting point and your ultimate destination! He will punish you by stripping the wealth from your hand, so you will come to be empty-handed, as you used to be poor at heart. You will always be poor, where things are concerned, since your appetite for them can never be satisfied. You will always be greedy for them, seeking them, agonizing over the desire for them and the means of obtaining them, only to find that they have not been allotted to you.

As one of the wise has said: “The harshest of all punishments is the quest for that which has not been allotted [by destiny].” Such will be your fate, unless Allāh wraps you in His mercy, and thereby alerts you to your sin, so that you seek His forgiveness, turn to Him in repentance, and confess your negligence, and He relents toward you and forgives you. So repent to Allāh, for He is the Most Merciful of the merciful *[Arḥam ar-rāḥimīn]*, Ever-Forgiving *[Ghafūr]*, All-Compassionate *[Raḥīm]*.

Concerning the modes of behavior required of the spiritual pauper in his poverty *[ādāb al-faqīr fī faqri-hi]*.

The spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* should devote his tender loving care to his poverty, just as the rich man devotes his tender loving care to his wealth. Just as the rich man does everything he can, and spares no effort, to ensure that his wealth does not vanish away, it is incumbent upon the pauper to do likewise, to ensure that his poverty does not disappear. This means that he should neither ask Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) to translate his poverty into wealth, nor focus his attention on livelihood and income, on ways of earning money, and on the means of getting rich. If he has any interest in acquiring more wealth, it should only be for sake of his dependents, and to safeguard his personal virtue under the stress of difficult circumstances.

To meet the required standard, the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* must settle for what is sufficient for his needs, and not reach beyond that level of sufficiency. By settling for that amount, he will be in compliance with the commandment of Allāh (Exalted is He), and on guard against the danger of committing the sin of suicide *[qatl an-nafs]*. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

And do not kill your own selves.	*wa lā taqtulū anfusa-kum*
Surely Allāh is ever Compassionate	*inna 'llāha kāna*
unto you. (4:29)	*bi-kum Raḥīmā.*

It is unlawful for him to deny his lower self *[nafs]* its due, which is the right to be nourished with food and drink, provided with clothing, and supplied with whatever is necessary to support its physical constitution. He must not be too weak to carry out the commandments [of the sacred law], such as the fulfillment of the preconditions of the ritual prayer *[sharā'iṭ aṣ-ṣalāt]*, its basic essentials *[arkān]* and its necessary elements *[wājibāt]*,[13] as well as every other religious duty.

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[13] For a comprehensive account of the preconditions *[sharā'iṭ]*, basic essentials *[arkān]*, and necessary elements *[wājibāt]* of the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, see Vol. 1, pp. 8–16.

While giving the self its basic due *[haqq]*, he must leave out anything that constitutes a luxury *[hazz]*. If something belongs to him, as his predestined allotment *[qisma]*, it will be conveyed to him inevitably, not through his own involvement in the process, but through the action of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). This means that he must never concern himself with luxuries, unless he happens to be sick, and some kind of luxury is prescribed for him as a form of therapeutic treatment. In such a case, the luxury *[hazz]* becomes a right *[haqq]*, in the context of his sickness, just like nourishment in the context of his good health.

The following points are also extremely important to note:

- The pleasure he takes in his poverty must be greater than the rich man's delight in the existence of his wealth.
- He must actually prefer his humble status, his obscurity, and the fact that people do not invite him to their homes, do not come to visit him, and do not gather around him in crowds.
- In order to meet the required standard, his heart must be in a stronger state of spiritual purity *[safā' al-hāl]* when he is materially empty-handed. In other words, whenever the financial successes *[futūh]* are few and far between, the goodness of his heart should multiply, along with its strength and its radiance, and his delight in the banner of the righteous *[sālihīn]* should increase. If that casts a shadow of gloom upon his heart, and makes him feel bitter and displeased with his Lord, he must realize that he is a madman, who has committed a heinous sin in his poverty. He must therefore repent to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) and seek His forgiveness. He must concentrate on exposing the lower self *[nafs]* to searching examination, thorough investigation, and stern reproach.

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Concerning the conduct required of the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* who has many dependents.

Whenever the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* has many dependents, his heart should be all the more firmly stationed at the door of the business of sustenance, and all the more reliant on his Lord. He must comply with the commandment of his Lord, by earning to support them in the outer sphere *[ẓāhir]*, and he must rely on the promise of his Lord, in the inner domain *[bāṭin]*. He must be convinced that provision is assigned to them in the presence of Allāh, sustenance that He has promised and foreordained, and that He will convey it to them, either by his hand or by the hand of someone else.

He must therefore renounce the rôle of middleman, and not act as an uncommissioned agent *[fuḍūlī]*. Instead of intervening between his fellow creatures and their Creator, he must obey the commandment in his dealings with them. He must not be at variance with the Lord, nor be resentful and suspicious of Him, and he must not doubt His promise. He must not complain to anyone. His complaint should be addressed to his Lord, and his need must be presented to Him (Almighty and Glorious is He). His speech and his begging should be addressed to Him, as a request for His enabling guidance *[taufīq]*, so that he may be patient, so that he may fulfill the commandment concerning what is due to his dependents, and so that he may be content to accept the hardship that He has decreed for them, and the fact that He has obliged him to carry their burden.

He should beg Him to make their sustenance smoothly and easily available, for He is Near *[Qarīb]* and Responsive *[Mujīb]*. When He subjects His servant to trial and tribulation, He is merely using the affliction to bring him back to Himself (Almighty and Glorious is He), because He loves those who urgently beseech Him with their begging. It is begging that distinguishes the Lord *[Rabb]* from the slave *[marbūb]*, the Master [*Sayyid*] from the servant [*ʿabd*], the One who is Rich [*Ghanī*] from the one who is poor [*faqīr*]. It is begging that moves the servant away from pride, haughtiness, self-aggrandizement and arrogance, and brings him to modesty, humility, and recognition of his state of need. Once the servant has truly undergone that transformation, the response to his plea will be realized quickly, here in this world, not to mention the reward that will be held in store for him in the hereafter.

Further modes of conduct required of the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]*.

He must not take any interest in the time that is still in the future. He should rather be wholly concerned with his present moment. Instead of looking forward to the next moment ahead, he must concentrate on preserving his spiritual state, its limits, its stipulations, and its rules of proper conduct, studiously focusing his gaze to avoid being distracted by anything else, whether above it or below it. He must also beware of coveting the spiritual state of anyone else, for it might harbor his destruction, even though it represents safety and well-being for the other person.

This bears comparison with foodstuffs, for certain foodstuffs make a particular individual healthier than ever, but they may bring sickness and misfortune to another, so the invalid must not include any part of them in his diet, except by order of the physician. It is equally important for the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* to refrain from choosing a particular state for himself, so that, if he does enter into it, he will do so not of his own volition, but through the action of the Master *[Maulā]* (Almighty and Glorious is He), the One who operates by pure decree and absolute will.

• He must not deliberately intrude his own self *[nafs]* into any of the spiritual states *[ḥālāt]* and stations *[maqāmāt]*, and cause it to settle therein, for then he would go astray and perish. He must wait until the command comes to him from the One who causes death and brings to life, and until he is relocated by the action of the One who withholds and gives, impoverishes and enriches, makes men laugh and makes men weep, because that is more proper for him, and nearer and closer to his Lord. Such is the instruction that was followed and handed down by our predecessors, the masters of knowledge *[uli'l-'ilm]* among the people of the Spiritual Path *[ahl aṭ-Ṭarīqa]*, as the only course they saw fit to pursue, for the Lord of the created universe is the ultimate goal.

- He must be prepared for the arrival of death, in a state of readiness for it, watchful and on the lookout at all times. That will be helpful to him, in being content with his poverty, and in bearing any troubles that befall him, because it will enable him to curtail his expectation. The lower self *[nafs]* will be subdued thereby, and it will cease to glow with the intense heat of worldly appetites. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> You must make a frequent practice of remembering the wrecker of delights *[hādhim al-ladhdhāt]*, by which I mean death.

- He must rid his heart of all recollection of created beings.
- He must behave politely with the rich man, when the latter pays him a visit, by offering him whatever food or fruit he has at his disposal, even if it is something very plain and simple. Since he is wary in his heart of all material means *[asbāb]*, it is incumbent upon him to be altruistic, more than it is upon the rich man, who is held in captivity by his wealth. This advice does not apply, however, if he has dependents in straitened circumstances, for he must not make life hard for his dependents, by according that preferential treatment to the rich man—unless he has already learned, from his dependents themselves, that they happily endorse his altruism, that they willingly choose patience, contentment, inner wisdom *[ma'rifa]* and certainty *[yaqīn]*, and that radiant lights shine from their hearts, to illuminate their tongues, their physical bodies, and their souls *[anfus]*. If such be the case, he is not torn between giving freely and withholding, between generosity and restraint.
- He must not abandon the practice of pious caution *[wara']*, not even in the state of empty-handedness. He must not risk trespassing, because of his poverty, on that which is not allowed by the sacred law *[shar']*, by deserting the strict interpretation *['azīma]* in favor of the dispensations *[rukhas]*. Pious caution *[wara']* is the mainstay of religion *[dīn]*, while greed is its destruction, and acts of dubious legality *[shubuhāt]* result in its corruption.

As one of the righteous *[ṣāliḥīn]* once said: "If someone is not accompanied by pious caution *[wara']* in his poverty, he will eat

The Sixth Discourse

On the special merit of the month of Shaʿbān, and the divine forgiveness *[maghfira]* and good pleasure *[riḍwān]* sent down on the middle night of that month.

ʿĀʾisha, the wife of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace, and may He be well pleased with her), is reported as having said:[101]

> Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to fast until we would say he was never going to stop fasting, and he would go so long without fasting that we would say he was never going to fast, but I never saw Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continue a fast from the beginning to the end of any month except the month of Ramadān, [apart from which] I never saw him do more fasting in any month than he did in Shaʿbān.[102]

ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is also reported as having said:[103]

> Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to fast until we would say he was never going to stop fasting, and go so long without fasting that we would say he was never going to fast. The fasting he liked best was that he did in Shaʿbān, so I said to him: "O Messenger of Allāh, how is it I always see

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[101] **Author's note:** We are informed of this report by Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad [ibn al-Bannāʾ], who cites the following chain of transmission *[isnād]*: His own father, Abū ʿAlī ibn Ahmad—Abu'l-Husain ʿAlī ibn Muhammad ibn ʿUmar ibn Hafs Jaʿfar al-Muqri—Abu'l-Fath al-Hāfiz—Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ash-Shāfiʿī—Ishāq ibn al-Hasan—ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Salama—Mālik ibn Anas—Abu'n-Nadr, the client of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbdi'llāh—Abū Salama ibn ʿAbd ar-Rahmān—ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

[102] **Author's note:** This is an authentic tradition *[hadīth sahīh]*, cited by al-Bukhārī on the authority of ʿAbdu'llāh ibn Yūsuf, who transmitted it from Mālik [ibn Anas] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him.)

[103] **Author's note:** We learned of this report from Shaikh Abū Nasr Muhammad, on the authority of his father, with a chain of transmission *[isnād]* from Hishām ibn ʿUrwa—ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

Concerning the begging of the spiritual pauper *[su'āl al-faqīr]*.

The proper conduct of the spiritual pauper *[adab al-faqīr]* includes refraining from begging from his fellow creatures, as long as he has enough at his disposal to meet his essential requirements. If he is then beset by urgent necessity and pressing need, he should beg in proportion to the need, since his need will be his atonement *[kaffāra]*. Under these circumstances, begging is actually assigned to him as a task to perform. He should not beg for his own sake, to the extent that he can avoid it, but rather for his dependents, as we have previously explained.

If, at his immediate disposal, he has a coin worth one-sixth of a dirham, and he needs a whole dirham [silver coin], he will not be charged with the task of begging, until he has spent the small coin, and can seriously claim to be completely out of funds. As the saying goes: "Nothing emerges from the hidden universe *[ghaib]*, as long as you still have something in your own purse *[jaib]*."

There is a condition attached to his right to beg from his fellow creatures: namely, that he should not see them [as the potential donors], but should direct his begging gesture toward Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). He should look upon his fellow creatures as agents *[wukalā']* and trustees *[umanā']*, who are merely the instruments by which the transaction is conducted. He must not accept them as lords *[arbāb]*, instead of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). The point of his begging from them should therefore be to inform them of his condition, and that of his dependents, not to complain about his Lord.

His begging must be interrogative, so he should cast it in the form of questions, like: "Has something meant for us been delivered to you? Has it been forwarded to you? Have you been authorized to handle it, O agent, O custodian, O trustee, O slave, O pauper? Are we not equal, you and I, in terms of what we have at our disposal, since neither of us is the Owner of it, and all of us are His dependents!" So long as he begs in this fashion, it is permissible, otherwise not.

No respect is due to any polytheist *[mushrik]*, charlatan *[dajjāl]*, dissimulator *[murā'in]*, idol-worshipper *['ābid al-aṣnām]*, deserter from the ranks of the people of the Spiritual Path *[khārij 'an ahl aṭ-Ṭarīqa]*, pretender *[mudda'in]*, persistent liar *[kadhdhāb]*, hypocrite *[munāfiq]*, or atheistic heretic *[zindīq]*.

Then, if the beggar is given something, he must give thanks. If giving is withheld, he must be patient. Such are the attributes of the genuine spiritual pauper *[faqīr ṣādiq]*. He must not be disheartened by rejection. He must not let it change his attitude, so that he resorts to angry protest, blaming the rejector and abusing him unjustly. He must remember that he is addressing an official *[ma'mūr]* and an agent *[wakīl]*, and the agent is merely the one who handles what is placed at his disposal, with the permission of his Commander *[Āmir]*, while the One who appointed him is the Giver *[Mu'ṭī]*, and He is none other than Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

Instead of reacting badly, he must apply again to Him (Almighty and Glorious is He), and beg Him to make things easy and smooth, so that hearts will be inclined to serve him, difficulties will become simple for him, provisions will flow toward him, the allotments of destiny *[aqsām]* will be conveyed to him, and he will be relieved of hunger, torment, and groveling before slaves and masters.

Perhaps He gripped the hands of His creatures to prevent them from giving, in order to make the beggar turn to Him. The beggar must therefore cling to the door, and remove the screen by means of his supplication and humble entreaty, for He will be the One who gives to him, rather than any of His servants.

◆

the Spiritual Path *[ahl aṭ-Ṭarīqa]*, as the only course they saw fit to pursue, for the Lord of the created universe is the ultimate goal.

- He must be prepared for the arrival of death, in a state of readiness for it, watchful and on the lookout at all times. That will be helpful to him, in being content with his poverty, and in bearing any troubles that befall him, because it will enable him to curtail his expectation. The lower self *[nafs]* will be subdued thereby, and it will cease to glow with the intense heat of worldly appetites. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> You must make a frequent practice of remembering the wrecker of delights *[hādhim al-ladhdhāt]*, by which I mean death.

- He must rid his heart of all recollection of created beings.
- He must behave politely with the rich man, when the latter pays him a visit, by offering him whatever food or fruit he has at his disposal, even if it is something very plain and simple. Since he is wary in his heart of all material means *[asbāb]*, it is incumbent upon him to be altruistic, more than it is upon the rich man, who is held in captivity by his wealth. This advice does not apply, however, if he has dependents in straitened circumstances, for he must not make life hard for his dependents, by according that preferential treatment to the rich man—unless he has already learned, from his dependents themselves, that they happily endorse his altruism, that they willingly choose patience, contentment, inner wisdom *[ma'rifa]* and certainty *[yaqīn]*, and that radiant lights shine from their hearts, to illuminate their tongues, their physical bodies, and their souls *[anfus]*. If such be the case, he is not torn between giving freely and withholding, between generosity and restraint.
- He must not abandon the practice of pious caution *[wara']*, not even in the state of empty-handedness. He must not risk trespassing, because of his poverty, on that which is not allowed by the sacred law *[shar']*, by deserting the strict interpretation *['azīma]* in favor of the dispensations *[rukhas]*. Pious caution *[wara']* is the mainstay of religion *[dīn]*, while greed is its destruction, and acts of dubious legality *[shubuhāt]* result in its corruption.

As one of the righteous *[sālihīn]* once said: "If someone is not accompanied by pious caution *[wara']* in his poverty, he will eat

the language of which	*wa ja'alta'l-lughata 'l-*
You have caused to be	*'arabiyyata 'l-*
the eloquent Arabic tongue.[537]	*faṣīḥata lisāna-h*
and [concerning which]	*wa*
You have said,	*qulta*
O Most Excellent of sayers	*yā 'azza*
(Glory be to Him):	*min qā'ilin subḥāna-h:*
So, when We recite it,	*fa-idhā qara'nāhu*
follow its recitation.	*fa-'ttabi' qur'ānah*
Then upon Us	*thumma inna*
rests the task of explaining it.	*'alai-nā bayāna-h.*
(75:18,19)	
It is the best	*wa huwa aḥsanu*
of Your Books in arrangement,	*Kutubi-ka niẓāmā*
the most lucid of them in speech,	*wa afṣaḥu-hā kalāmā:*
and the clearest of them in stating	*wa abyanu-hā*
what is lawful and unlawful.	*ḥalālan wa ḥarāmā:*
It is precise in explanation,	*muḥkamu 'l-bayān:*
manifest in demonstration,	*ẓāhiru 'l-burhān:*
securely protected from excess	*maḥrūsun mina 'z-ziyādati*
and insufficiency.	*wa 'n-nuqṣān:*
In it there is a promise and a threat,[538]	*fī-hi wa'dun wa wa'īd:*
an intimidation and a menace.	*wa takhwīfun wa tahdīd:*
Falsehood cannot come at it	*lā ya'tī-hi 'l-bāṭilu min*
from before it or behind it.	*baini yadai-hi wa lā min khalfi-h:*
[It is] a revelation	*tanzīlun*
from One who is All-Wise,	*min Ḥakīmin*
All-Praiseworthy. (41:42)	*Ḥamīd.*
O Allāh, oblige us therefore	*Allāhumma fa-awjib la-nā*
to hold it in even greater honor.	*bi-hi 'sh-sharafa 'l-mazīd:*
Enroll us in	*wa alḥiq-nā*
every auspicious act of piety,	*bi-kulli birrin sa'īd:*
and keep us employed	*wa 'sta'mil-nā*
in righteous and rightly guided work.	*fi 'l-'amali 'ṣ-ṣāliḥi 'r-rashīd:*
You are indeed the Ever-Near,	*inna-ka Anta 'l-Qarību 'l-*
the Responsive.	*Mujīb:*
[Grant our requests]	
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*
O Allāh, as You have caused us to be	*Allāhumma fa-ka-mā ja'alta-nā*
believers in it [the Qur'ān],	*bi-hi muṣaddiqīn:*
and verifiers	*wa li-mā*
of that which it contains,	*fī-hi muḥaqqiqīn:*

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[537] Allāh (Exalted is He) has stated this emphatically in Q. 26:192-195.

[538] That is to say, the promise of blissful reward in the Garden of Paradise, and the threat of terrible torment in the Fire of Hell.

As for that which He has placed at the disposal of His creatures, its use must be subject to the rule of the sacred law *[ḥukm ash-shar']*, pious restraint *[wara']*, and strict observance of the divine statutes *[ḥudūd]*, so that the user does not become one of those atheistic heretics *[zanādiqa]*, the party of antinomian libertinism *[zumrat al-ibāḥiyya]*.[14]

- If he is afflicted by severe hardship or indigence, it is incumbent upon him to conceal his condition from his spiritual brothers *[ikhwān]*, to the best of his ability, in case their hearts become troubled on his account, and they feel obliged to demonstrate their concern. By the same token, if he is beset with anxiety, or stricken with grief, he must not let that become apparent to his spiritual brothers.
- He must not do anything to disturb and upset his spiritual brothers, when they are in a state of happiness and good cheer, comfort and joie de vivre.
- If he realizes that his spiritual brothers are actually suffering from anxiety and grief, although they have been putting on a show of happiness and joy, he must encourage them outwardly to maintain the appearance of sprightliness and good cheer, while concealing from them any feelings of estrangement, sadness or worry that may be troubling him.
- He must not confront them with something they dislike, nor disagree with them over their attitude toward it.
- For the sake of good social relations, if he feels alienated by something someone says or does, it is incumbent upon him to maintain a polite conversation, while redirecting his heart toward the person concerned, so that his feeling of alienation will gradually fade away.
- He must relate to each individual as he finds him, without pushing him beyond his limit, or pressing him to conform to his own pattern. He should rather adapt himself to suit the person concerned, so long as that entails no breach of the sacred law *[shar']*, for, as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> All the Prophets *[Anbiyā']* have instructed us to converse with people according to their level of intelligence and understanding.

- It is incumbent upon him to relate to his subordinates with tender loving care, to his superiors with dignified respect, and to his equals with positive favor *[ifḍāl]*, preferential treatment *[īthār]*, and active goodness *[iḥsān]*.

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[14] For an extensive discussion of the heretical sects and their doctrines, see Vol. 1, pp. 393–446.

Concerning the modes of behavior proper to spiritual paupers at mealtimes *[ādāb al-fuqarā' 'inda 'l-akl]*.

As for the proprieties to be observed by spiritual paupers at meal times, they include the following:

- They must not eat gluttonously, nor in a state of heedlessness. On the contrary, they must remember Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) with their hearts, and not forget Him at mealtimes.
- They must not stretch their hands toward the food, before those who take precedence over them.
- They must not say, "Eat up!" to other people.
- They must not take anything from what is in front of them, and set it in front of someone else, whether as a gesture of service, or as a cheerful gesture of goodwill. This should only be done by the provider of the meal, for he is charged with that task, because it is a form of service on his part.
- They must not say to the provider of the meal: "Eat with us!"
- If one of them has been seated in a particular place, he must not choose another. He must sit where he is told to sit.
- He must not remove his hand from the food, as long as those with him are still eating, in case the provider might take it as a sign of rejection, and feel embarrassed.
- The food must not be removed from in front of the pauper, as long as he is eating, and still has his eye fixed upon it.
- He should encourage his companions to eat, provided there is no objection, even if he has no appetite for it himself.
- He must not feed morsels to anyone across the table.
- If water is offered to him, he must not reject the offering of the water bearer *[sāqī]*, not even by as little as a single drop.
- If the provider of the meal stands up to be of service, the pauper must not try to restrain him. Even if he wishes to pour water over his hand, he must not restrain him.

- When dining with the rich, he must maintain a dignified detachment *[ta'azzuz]*, with the poor, a readiness to offer preferential treatment *[īthār]*, and with his spiritual brothers *[ikhwān]*, an attitude of cheerful goodwill *[inbisāṭ]*.
- He should not entertain the notion of eating, unless he is actually present at a meal, in which case he must eat.
- He must not encourage himself to indulge an appetite. Since what he fancies may not have been allotted to him [by destiny], which means that he can never obtain it, he risks being screened by it from Allāh (Exalted is He), and preoccupied with it to the detriment of his worshipful obedience and his vigilant awareness of his spiritual state. If he turns his back on that temptation, and concentrates on his spiritual state, he will be safe and sound. It may be, however, that something he fancies has actually been allotted to him, in which case his appetite for it will revive. Then, once he has obtained it, he must give thanks to Allāh (Exalted is He).
- He must not let eating become his main concern. He must not let his heart become attached to it, and he must not make it the subject of his conversation. In order to counter such tendencies, he should persuade his lower self *[nafs]* that it is sick, and that its condition calls for abstinence from food, drink, and carnal appetites, until it is cured of its sickness. That sickness consists of its passion, its willfulness and its desires, and the Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) is its physician and its therapist. If He sends it food and drink, by the hand of His servant, it must accept them, knowing that its cure and its well-being depend on that treatment, and on no other.
- He must concentrate on preserving the spiritual state *[hifz al-hāl]*, on vigilant awareness, on expelling things from the heart, and ridding it of reliance and dependence on any thing—always, and in all his active and passive situations *[harakāt wa sakanāt]*.

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Concerning the proper modes of conduct *[ādāb]* to be observed by spiritual paupers *[fuqarā’]* in relation to one another *[fī mā baina-hum]*.

These are some of the modes of conduct *[ādāb]* they must practice in relation to one another:

- None of them should refuse to let his companions make use of anything that belongs to him, such as articles of clothing, prayer rugs, riding animals, and so on.
- Even if one of them sets foot on his prayer rug *[sajjāda]*, its owner should not take offense, though he must not set his own foot on someone else's prayer rug, nor must he spread his own prayer rug over that of someone who is above him in rank.
- Even if someone stretches his hand to touch his shoulder, he should not prevent him, though he must not stretch his own hand to touch someone else on the shoulder.
- He must not treat any of the spiritual paupers *[fuqarā’]* as his servant, though he must place himself at the service of each and every one of them.
- He must not squeeze the feet of his fellow paupers *[fuqarā’]*, but if one of them wishes to squeeze his foot, he must not restrain him.
- When they enter the public steam bath *[hammām]*, the proper conduct of the spiritual paupers *[ādāb al-fuqarā’]* does not include letting the attendant on duty massage them, but if one of them wishes to massage another, he should allow him to do so, and not restrain him.
- If a fellow pauper *[faqīr]* admires his tattered robe *[khirqa]*, his prayer rug, or anything else of the kind, he must hand it over to him at once, and treat him as more deserving of it.
- He must not keep his fellow paupers *[fuqarā’]* waiting for him at mealtimes. In every other situation, likewise, he must do his best to avoid disturbing anyone's heart by keeping him waiting, for it is

troublesome to be kept waiting. If he wishes to provide a fellow pauper *[faqīr]* with a meal, he must not keep him in a state of expectation, because waiting for the broth is a form of humiliation.

• He should not keep anything stored away, when he could make it available.

• If the meal does not amount to very much, he should only eat the leftovers, after the others have finished.

• When he provides a meal for his fellow paupers *[fuqarā']*, he must try very hard to present it as neatly and tastefully as he possibly can.

• If he is dining in company, he should not act differently from the others, by eating one thing and not partaking of another. If he has the opportunity to share something, he should set it in the middle of the table.

• If he falls sick, while he is in company, so that he needs something special to treat his condition, it is proper for him to seek permission from the others present, before taking his medicine.

• As for the situation where he is staying at a guesthouse *[ribāṭ]* or a school *[madrasa]*, in which a Shaikh is present, or an attendant is on duty, he is obliged to accept the authority *[hukm]* of that Shaikh, and he must not do anything without consulting him first.

• If he arrives to join a group, he must harmonize with its members in whatever activity they happen to be engaged in.

• He should not raise his voice among his fellow paupers *[fuqarā']*, when pronouncing his glorification of Allāh *[tasbīḥ]* and performing his Qur'ānic recitation. He should rather conceal that from them and keep it under his breath, or else convert it into meditation *[tafakkur]* and the practice of inner worship *['ibāda bāṭina]*.

This does not apply, however, if he is one of the special élite *[khawāṣṣ]*, those who are privy to the mysteries *[dhawi 'l-asrār]*. There is then no need for him to stand on ceremony, because his Lord will control him, prepare him, and tell him what to do and what not to do, in keeping with the situation. His Lord will put the hearts of the community *[jamā'a]* at his disposal, incline them toward him, and fill them, sometimes with love for him, and sometimes with awe and respect.

• It is likewise inappropriate for him to raise his voice for any other reason, when speaking in their midst.

- While he is with a particular group, it is inappropriate for him to hold a secret conversation with anyone outside the group.

- When conversing in the company of his fellow paupers *[fuqarā']*, he should refrain, as far as he can, from talking about worldly matters, foodstuffs and the like.

- He must also refrain from doing any writing in the company of his fellow paupers *[fuqarā']*, if he can possibly avoid it. He should rather concentrate on the work prescribed [*maktūb*; lit., written], meaning the supervision of his heart, the preservation of his spiritual state, and the contemplation of these two duties.

- He must not engage in numerous supererogatory devotions *[nawāfil]* in their presence.

- If the whole community *[jamā'a]* is fasting, he should fast along with them, and if they are not fasting, he should likewise act in harmony with them. He must not separate himself from them by fasting in isolation.

- He must not sleep in the company of his fellow paupers *[fuqarā']*, while they are all awake, unless slumber overwhelms him irresistibly. If that happens, he should withdraw from them and lie down to rest, as unobtrusively as possible.

- He must do his best to avoid imposing his personal wish and preference on his fellow paupers *[fuqarā']*.

- If a fellow pauper *[faqīr]* requests something of him, he must not refuse him, not even slightly, and he must not injure his heart by making him endure a lengthy wait.

- If one of them seeks his advice, he must not cut him off with a hasty response. He should rather allow him plenty of time, so that he can give full expression to all that is in his heart. Then, when he does respond, it should not be with rejection and negation. If, after hearing the whole story, he considers it to be incorrect, he must start by expressing some agreement. He should first say: "Well, that is one way of looking at it." He should then go on to explain the view that is more correct, in his opinion, and he should do so with gentle kindness, not in a harsh and frosty manner.

- While engaged in eating, they must neither praise nor criticize the meal.

Concerning the proper modes of conduct *[ādāb]* to be observed by the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* in relation to his wife and children.

These are some of the modes of conduct *[ādāb]* to be observed by the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* in relation to his wife and children:

- He must relate to them on the basis of good morality *[ḥusn al-khulq]*, and provide them with fair treatment *[ma'rūf]*, to the best of his ability.
- If he has just enough in his possession, on a given day, to meet his daily requirements, and he needs to use that amount for immediate purposes, he should not hold anything in reserve for the morrow. If he does end up with something to spare, he must keep it for another day, but for the sake of his dependents, not for his own sake.
- He must not eat, unless they have already eaten.
- In relation to his dependents, he must be like a trusted agent *[wakīl]* and a servant, and like a slave *[mamlūk]* with his master.
- He must carry the firm conviction that, by serving his dependents, laboring to support them, and looking after their interests, he is fulfilling the commandment of Allāh, in worshipful obedience to Him.
- He must set service to himself aside, and consider his dependents more important than himself.
- When it comes to eating, he must adjust his diet to suit their tastes, and not oblige them to follow his own appetite.
- If he has in his possession some item that is useful to him in the winter, and he needs the price he can get for it in the summer, he must exchange it to meet his summertime need.
- If he finds that he has enough for the present day, to meet the needs of his dependents, and there is still time left to earn enough for the coming day, he should not concern himself with that. He should rather stop at what is sufficient for the present day, because sticking to

sufficiencies *[kifāyāt]* is a necessary duty *[wājib]*, and he must postpone the management of tomorrow until tomorrow.

- If he has the strength required for absolute trust *[tawakkul]*, and the patience *[ṣabr]* it takes to endure the hardship of scarcity, hunger and deprivation, but his dependents lack that kind of strength, it is not permissible for him to urge them to match his own spiritual state. He must rather bestir himself, and earn what he can for their benefit.

- If he sees that the members of his family are disposed toward obedience to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), good conduct, and worshipful service *[ʿibāda]*, it is incumbent upon him to earn an income that is lawful *[ḥalāl]*, and to provide them with food that is permissible *[mubāḥ]*, in order to encourage that obedience and righteousness *[ṣalāḥ]* to grow and flourish. He must not provide them with food that is unlawful *[ḥarām]*, for that would encourage the growth of disobedience and sinfulness *[junāḥ]*.

- He must exert himself strenuously to improve his own behavior, his truthfulness *[ṣidq]*, and the purity of his inner being *[bāṭin]*, so that Allāh may improve his relations with his dependents, in terms of excellent patience, excellent obedience to himself and to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and compliance with His will. The blessed grace *[baraka]* of his righteousness will thereby accrue to his dependents, for the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

> If someone improves his relationship with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), Allāh (Exalted is He) will improve his relations with his fellow human beings.

—and his family and dependents are included among his fellow human beings.

- If a guest comes to visit him, he is obliged to provide his dependents with the same fare that he offers to his guest, provided he has the capacity and ability to do so, in which case he must supply them all so abundantly that, far from being merely satisfied, they have more than enough to eat. On the other hand, if poverty, scarcity and empty-handedness prevail, and he knows that he can count on the altruism and approval of his dependents, he must give preferential treatment to his guests. Then, if there is anything left over, they can enjoy it as a blessing. Allāh (Exalted is He) will surely recompense them, and grant them broader opportunities, for, "the guest arrives with a blessing, and carries away the sins of the household," as we are told in the traditional saying *[ḥadīth]*.

- If someone invites the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* to a meal, when he has dependents to look after, and he does not have anything to improve their situation, it is not part of the code of chivalry *[futuwwa]* that he should neglect his dependents, go off to accept the invitation, and treat his own appetite as more important than the dire need of his dependents. Nor is it in keeping with the Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]* and the Sacred Law *[Sharī'a]* to subject one's dependents to misery and disappointment, because of an invitation. He should therefore refrain from attending, and stay patiently at home with his family. If the person who issues the invitation has any chivalry *[futuwwa]* inside him, and he knows that the invited guest has dependents in his care, it is incumbent upon him to do more than ask him to attend in person. He must relieve the guest's heart of concern for his dependents, by sending them enough to satisfy their needs, and by letting his guest know that he is doing so.
- It is the duty of the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* to train his family to adhere to the outer aspect of religious knowledge *[ẓāhir al-'ilm]* and the Sacred Law *[Sharī'a]*, and to ensure that they do not act contrary to religious knowledge, whether seldom or often.
- He must not consign his children to the marketplace, and the study of business crafts. He should rather teach them the rules and principles of the religion *[aḥkām ad-dīn]*, and induce them to abstain from the pursuit of worldly interests. This does not apply, however, if he is overwhelmed by poverty, lack of patience, vulnerability, degradation, and dependence on his fellow creatures for food and everything else he needs. In such a case, it is necessary for his whole family—his wife, his children and himself—to concentrate on earning, on acquiring the means to gain independence from other people, while keeping within the limits [prescribed by the sacred law], for he should be more virtuous than others.
- He must make his children aware of the duty to respect the right of parents *[ḥaqq al-wālidain]*, and to avoid undutiful behavior *['uqūq]* toward them.[15]

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[15] As explained in an earlier section of the present work:

Undutiful treatment of one's parents *['uqūq al-wālidain]* ... may mean any or all of the following: failing to respect their solemn warnings, striking them when they speak to you reproachfully, refusing to give them something when they ask you for it, or refusing to feed them when they are hungry and begging you to feed them. (See Vol. 2, p. 110.)

- He must teach his wife to respect the right of Allāh, as well as his own right *[haqq]*, and make her understand the virtue of patience with Him, obedience to Him, and so on, as we have explained in the chapter concerning the rules of good conduct pertaining to marriage *[ādāb an-nikāḥ]*.[16]

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[16] See Vol. 1, pp. 112–50.

Concerning the proper modes of conduct *[ādāb]* to be observed by the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* in the course of a journey.

As we have explained in an earlier section of this work, entitled The Book of Good Manners *[Kitāb al-Ādāb]*,[17] the proper attitude to going on a journey is best described in the language of spiritual experience *[ʿalā lisāni 'l-maʿrifa]*. The traveler is moving away from his blameworthy characteristics *[awṣāf madhmūma]* in the direction of his praiseworthy attributes *[ṣifāt ḥamīda]*, so he must leave his passions *[hawā]* behind, as he sets out to win the approval of his Master *[Maulā]* by correcting any shortcomings in his dutiful devotion *[taqwā]*.

The first obligations he must therefore discharge, when he proposes to travel away from his home town, are the following:

- He must placate his adversaries in litigation *[khuṣūm]*.
- He must obtain the permission of his parents, or of other senior relatives, such as his paternal uncle *[ʿamm]*, maternal uncle *[khāl]*, grandfather *[jadd]* and grandmother *[jadda]*, to whom he owes the same kind of respect. If they grant their approval, he may embark upon his journey.
- If he has dependents in his care, and his traveling away from them would cause them serious hardship and deprivation, his journey cannot be sanctioned, until after he has improved their state of affairs, or unless he treats them as his traveling companions, and takes them along with him. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> It is sin enough for a man, to deprive those whom he ought to be sustaining.

When the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* undertakes a journey, he does so with the stipulation that his heart must travel with him. His heart must not be hankering after some attachment left behind him, nor must his heart be attached to some attraction in front of him. Wherever he may stop along the way, his heart must always be with him.

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[17] See Vol. 1, pp. 86–90.

His heart must be free and uncluttered by things, as illustrated by the following story, in which it is related that Ibrāhīm ibn Dawha said: "I once went out into the desert with Ibrāhīm ibn Shaiba, and he said to me: 'You must throw away whatever attachments you have with you.' I promptly discarded everything, apart from one dīnār [gold coin], so he said: 'You must not disturb my innermost being *[sirr]*. Get rid of what you still have with you!' I thereupon discarded the dīnār, but he said again: 'You must throw away whatever attachments you have with you.' I then remembered that I did have some shoelaces with me, so I threw them away, and—by Allāh!—whenever I needed a shoelace along the way, I always found one right in front of me! Ibrāhīm ibn Shaiba told me: 'That is how it is, for someone who deals with Allāh (Exalted is He) on the basis of truthfulness *[ṣidq]*.'"

In the course of his journey, he must not perform any fewer litanies *[aurād]*[18] than he usually performs at home. Since the journey represents an addition to his spiritual states, it is not appropriate for him to make his journey an excuse for leaving gaps in his religious practices and his spiritual states. Dispensations *[rukhas]* are meant for the weak and for the common folk. It is not for the strong and the special élite *[khawāṣṣ]* to avail themselves of dispensations. The strict rule *['azīma]* is always applicable to them, in all their states and circumstances. Enabling grace *[taufīq]* enfolds them, merciful compassion descends upon them, protection stands beside them, and safekeeping is constantly present for them. The Friend *[Ḥabīb]* is sitting in their company, and intimacy *[uns]* with Him is ever on the increase. Through Him all needs are satisfied, and through Him resources are continuously supplied. Victory for them is inevitable, and the [angelic] troops are massed in disciplined formation, obediently arrayed in their presence.

As far as their true purpose is concerned, traveling is therefore a stronger, more fitting, and worthier experience [than staying at home], since it entails distance from the material means *[asbāb]*, which may become lords *[arbāb]*, and from fellow creatures, who may become idols *[aṣnām]*, more misleading than the [Christian] crosses *[ṣulbān]*, and even worse than the Devil *[ash-Shaiṭān]*.

It is important for the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* to pay close attention to his heart, at the beginning of his journey, and not to start out in a state of heedlessness. He must also exert himself strenuously, throughout the course of his journey, to ensure that his heart does not become forgetful of his Lord.

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[18] For a full account of the litanies *[aurād]* of the nighttime and daytime, see Vol. 4, pp. 82–109.

His journey must not be undertaken for any worldly purpose, in any respect whatsoever. The purpose of his journey must rather be the fulfillment of some act of worshipful obedience [*ṭāʿa mina'ṭ-ṭāʿāt*], such as the Pilgrimage [*Ḥajj*], a meeting with a Shaikh, or a visit to one of the noble Holy Places.

If the spiritual pauper [*faqīr*] is traveling, and his heart is enraptured by a certain place, and he sees that his heart is clearer there, and less confused, and that his daily life there would be more complete, he must stay in that place. He must not move away from it, except in response to a positive command, or the action of a pure force, or a decree of destiny [*qadar*], in which case he must move on. He must do whatever he is commanded to do, and go wherever destiny sends him, assuming that he is one of those who are acted upon [*mafʿūlīn fī-him*], one of those who are no longer controlled by passion, willful inclinations and desires, one of those who are completely detached from worldly ties, and one of those who are loved and sought [*al-murādīn al-maḥbūbīn*].

If a spiritual pauper [*faqīr*] is accorded high rank and deferential treatment in a particular place, he must depart from it. He must train himself to feel acutely uncomfortable with that kind of treatment, so that it does not lead to his banishment and separation from Allāh, and to his being left with nothing but mere creatures. This only applies as long as passion [*hawā*] still exists. Once passion is defunct, creatures have no significant existence, and the treatment they accord has no effect, for they are outside of the heart. Now there are screens to shut creatures out, and guards to keep the heart safe from their intrusion, thereby denying access to polytheistic association [*shirk*], and preventing the affirmation of Divine Oneness [*tawḥīd*] from disintegrating.

It is also important for the traveler to relate to his companions on the journey in a good-natured manner and with courteous affability, avoiding confrontation and argumentativeness in all things. He should make every effort to be of service to his companions on the journey, and he should not ask any of them to act as his servant.

He should maintain a state of ritual purity [*ṭahāra*] throughout his journey, and if he cannot find water, he must perform the dry ablution its ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* a second time, in the manner we have described.

Then [having completed the second washing of the corpse] he should wash it for the last time, using water containing camphor. Then he must wipe it dry with a piece of cloth.

(The corpse must be washed at least three times, and seven times at most. If three washings are not sufficient to make it properly clean, it should therefore be given extra washings, up to a maximum of seven. Whatever the final total, however, it must always be an odd number, in other words, three or five or seven.)

If something is excreted from the corpse after that [third washing], the washing should be repeated up to seven times. If that is still not enough to put a stop to the excretion, the orifice should be plugged with cotton, and covered with a patch and hot perfume. According to some of our fellow [Ḥanbalī] scholars, however, the corpse should not be plugged, because Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) disapproved of the practice.

According to certain authorities, if something is excreted from the corpse after the washing has been completed, the entire process of washing should not be repeated. Further washing should rather be confined to the place of the impurity.

Then the corpse should be given the ritual ablution *[wuḍū']* that is normally performed in preparation for the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*, wrapped in its shroud, and carried to the place of burial.

The best practice is to perform the first washing of the corpse with water and ground lotus leaves *[sidr]*, and the rest of the washings with pure water, as in the ritual ablution normally performed to remove a state of major impurity *[ghusl al-janāba]*. Camphor should be added in the final washing, then the corpse should be wiped dry and wrapped in its shroud.

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Concerning the proper modes of conduct *[ādāb]* to be observed by spiritual paupers *[fuqarāʾ]* in relation to the spiritual concert *[samāʿ]*.

These are some of the modes of conduct *[ādāb]* to be observed by spiritual paupers *[fuqarāʾ]* in relation to the spiritual concert *[samāʿ]*:

- They must not feel obliged to participate in the spiritual concert *[samāʿ]*, nor should they attend it of their own accord.

- If the spiritual concert *[samāʿ]* happens to start unexpectedly in his presence, the proper course for the listener is to remain seated and practice good manners, while remembering his Lord with his heart, and concentrating on preserving his heart from the perilous onslaughts of heedlessness and forgetfulness.

- If something [in the recitation] makes him prick up his ears, he must regard the reciter of the Qurʾān as an interrogator *[mustantiq]*, who is examining him on behalf of the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He), concerning the signals he is receiving from the unseen *[ghaib]*, which may call for encouragement or discouragement, reassurance or reprimand, extra devotion to His service (Almighty and Glorious is He), or something else again. Whenever this happens, he must review his receiving at once, and compare the indication with it immediately. Thus, while it may seem, at the outset of the spiritual concert *[samāʿ]*, as if the tongue of the Qurʾān-reciter is his own tongue, it will come to be as if He, the Lord of Truth, is uttering the words recited by the Qurʾān-reciter.

- Whenever he acts on the guidance he discovers in his inner feeling, in situations like this, the result must be consistent with the duty of servitude *[ʿubūdiyya]* and the norms of the Sacred Law. As a general principle, there is nothing, in either the Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]* or the knowledge of Reality *[ʿilm al-Ḥaqīqa]*, that is inconsistent with the norms of the Sacred Law *[ādāb ash-Sharīʿa]*.

- If the group has a Shaikh, who is present at the spiritual concert [*samāʿ*], the spiritual pauper [*faqīr*] is obliged to stay calm and quiet, as far as he can, and to respect the dignity of that Shaikh. If he receives a compelling command [from within], he is authorized to follow the spontaneous movement arising from that rapturous receiving [*ghalaba*]. Then, as soon as the rapture subsides, it is best for him to resume his quiet state, and respect the dignity of the Shaikh.
- It is not correct for the spiritual pauper [*faqīr*] to take issue with the Qurʾān-reciter, or the chanter [*qawwāl*], if he substitutes a more familiar diction for one that is more proper, thereby adapting the Qurʾān to suit contemporary linguistic usage. For, if the participants are honest in their aspiration, their dedication and their conduct, they will not receive movements in their hearts, and in their physical limbs and organs, except through hearing the speech of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), since that is the speech of their Beloved [*Maḥbūb*], and His peculiar attribute. It contains His remembrance [*dhikr*], and the remembrance of the saints [*awliyāʾ*], the moderns, the ancients, and those yet to come, the lover and the Beloved, the seeker [*murīd*] and the sought [*murād*], as well as censure and blame for those who merely pretend to love Him, and more besides.

On the other hand, if their honesty and their aspiration are flawed, and their claim is shown to be devoid of proof—if their vigorous adherence to rule and custom is without inner substance, truthfulness of conscience, intuitive understanding [*maʿrifa*], spiritual discovery [*mukāshafa*], extraordinary perceptions, awareness of the mysteries, and nearness, intimate friendship and contact with the Beloved—if it is not the genuine spiritual concert [*samāʿ*], which is the practice of listening to the Prophetic tradition [*ḥadīth*], and to speech that represents the norm [*sunna*] established by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), in the company of those who are well versed [*ʿulamaʾ*] in knowledge of Him, together with the special élite [*khawāṣṣ*], among the saints [*awliyāʾ*], the spiritual deputies [*abdāl*], and those who have attained to eminence [*aʿyān*]—and if their inner beings [*bawāṭin*] are devoid of all that, their attention will be focused on the chanter [*qawwāl*], the stanzas and the poems, which stir the natural instincts, and stimulate the enthusiasm of the fraternal lovers [*ʿushshāq*] by exciting their natural constitution, not by touching their hearts and their spirits [*arwāḥ*].

- It is incumbent upon the pauper *[faqīr]* in general—by which I mean both the pauper whose need is for this world, and the pauper whose need is for the hereafter and the transcendent realms of being *[akwān]*—to refrain from importuning the Qur'ān-reciter and the chanter *[qawwāl]* to engage in repetition and reiteration. That is something he should rather entrust to the Lord of Truth (Glory be to Him). If He so wishes, He will appoint someone to importune them on his behalf, or He may inspire the chanter *[qawwāl]* to repeat his words, if the listening pauper is sincere, and there is something to his advantage and benefit in the repetition.

- It is not appropriate for the pauper *[faqīr]* to seek assistance from others, while in the state of the spiritual concert *[samā']*, because that represents a weakness in the spiritual state. Nevertheless, if his fellow paupers *[fuqarā']* ask him for help with the movement they are trying to follow, he should assist them.

- If the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* is listening to a Qur'ānic verse *[āya]*, or a verse of poetry *[bait]*, no one ought to jostle him. He should be allowed to take his time, but if he is jostled regardless, his best course is to yield to the one who is pressing him to move.

- If the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* keeps on moving, instead of pausing to hear the recitation of a Qur'ānic or poetic verse, he should be allowed to take his time. Even if the other participants find this distracting, and consider him to be at fault, it is their duty to pardon him and be patient with him. Then, when a reasonable time has elapsed, he should be alerted gently, or through the inner feeling, not with the tongue. This illustrates the need for strength of spiritual state, inner purity, subtle knowledge, keen awareness, perfect standards of behavior, and a laudably intense degree of heedfulness.

- If one of them casts off a tattered robe *[khirqa]*, or some other article of clothing, while in the state of the spiritual concert *[samā']*, there are two possibilities to consider:

1. He may have intended to ingratiate himself with the Qur'ān-reciter, by dropping it at his feet, in which case it belongs specifically to the Qur'ān-reciter.
2. He may have discarded it in the middle of the room, in which case its fate will be determined by his response to the question: "What did you wish to see done with it?" If he says: "I intended to let my fellow

paupers *[fuqarā']* decide what to do with it," that means it was a gesture of friendship toward them on his part, so it belongs to them, in the category of providential opportunities *[futūh]*, and it is up to them to consider what use to make of it.

If he says: "My intention was to match the behavior of a certain Shaikh, who discarded his tattered robe *[khirqa]*," this explanation is very weak indeed. It is truly feeble, because no one is qualified to follow the Shaikh's example, when it comes to divesting himself of his tattered robe *[khirqa]*, unless he has already matched the Shaikh in his ecstatic experience *[wajd]* and his spiritual state, and it is extremely unlikely that two of them would be in one and the same spiritual state. His explanation is at odds with what is customary among the spiritual paupers *[fuqarā']*, and what is nowadays their regular common practice, in the matter of discarding the tattered robe *[khirqa]*. It is therefore without foundation. Since his action sprang from his weakness, the fate of his his tattered robe *[khirqa]* must be left for that Shaikh to decide, on the basis of customary practice, not of religious knowledge *['ilm]* and the Sacred Law *[Sharī'a]*, or in accordance with the Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]* and the experience of Reality *[Ḥaqīqa]*.

If the owner of the tattered robe *[khirqa]* says: "My intention was to harmonize with the other people present," this explanation is even weaker than the previous one, because joint participation in action is only appropriate when there is congruity of spiritual state and ecstasy *[wajd]*. That is experienced only as a rare coincidence by the people [of the Path], until they share an equal level of mystical inebriation *[shurb]* and spiritual state. He should therefore consult the members of the group, ascertain how they deal with their tattered robes *[khiraq]*, and take that as his model.

If he says: "At that moment, there was no particular purpose or intention," he should be told: "In that case, the decision is now up to you, so you may settle the matter as you see fit." It is absolutely incorrect for the others present to influence that decision, including the Shaikh, if he is in attendance, since none of them has any justification or reason for doing so, and there is no basis for it in the Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]*.

If he says: "At that moment, I simply received the signal to step out of the tattered robe *[khirqa]*, for no specific purpose," this may well have a basis in the Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]*, for the following reason: If the Sultān confers a robe of honor *[khil'a]* upon someone, it is incumbent upon the recipient of that honor to remove the garment he happens to be wearing, and don the robe of honor. The situation of the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* is therefore analogous, since he is obliged to step out of his tattered robe *[khirqa]*, and don what has been conferred upon him by the Maker *[Bārī]* (Almighty and Glorious is He), in the way of radiant lights, nearness, and gracious favors.

As for the disposal of his tattered robe *[khirqa]*, that should then be decided by the Shaikh, if he is in attendance. If not, the spiritual paupers *[fuqarā']* who are present should assign the task to the Qur'ān-reciter or the chanter *[qawwāl]*. According to some, however, the decision should be left to the spiritual pauper *[faqīr]* concerned, since he is better qualified than others to determine the fate of his tattered robe *[khirqa]*.

As another alternative, the worldly types who are present may offer to buy the tattered robe *[khirqa]*, and then return it to its owner, but this is not commendable in the Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]*. It is not an acceptable solution—O Allāh *[Allāhumma]*!—unless the buyer has an element of chivalry *[futuwwa]* within him, and some faith in the people [of the Spiritual Path], with whom he wishes to ingratiate himself. In that case, it could be seen as a kind of recompense, and a way of requesting favorable treatment. It is very reprehensible, nevertheless, considering the nature of the spiritual pauper's experience. By shedding his tattered robe *[khirqa]*, in the state he was in at the time, he demonstrated his genuine commitment to the spiritual state. It would be a shameful act on his part, amounting to calling himself a liar, if he were to resume the tattered robe *[khirqa]*, so that cannot be an acceptable solution.

It is never appropriate, for one who has stepped out of his tattered robe *[khirqa]*, to recover it and resume wearing it. If he receives a signal from a Shaikh, instructing him to take it back, he should take and wear it in public, in compliance with the Shaikh's command. He should then divest himself of it, later on, and give it as a friendly gift to someone else.

If something is dropped the middle of the room, for the benefit of the congregation, it should be distributed among them equally. If a Shaikh is in attendance, and he sees fit to specify a particular group, or a single individual among those present, the Shaikh is entitled to make that decision, and his opinion must be respected.

If a participant discards his tattered robe [*khirqa*], only to have it returned to him—contrary to the rule of his own Spiritual Path [*Ṭarīqa*], which requires him not to revert to anything he has discarded—and if the other spiritual paupers [*fuqarā'*] resume their tattered robes [*khiraq*], how should he handle the situation? The answer depends on whether or not he has a Shaikh. If he does have a Shaikh, he is entitled to refrain from reverting to his tattered robe [*khirqa*], and to stick to his own Spiritual Path [*Ṭarīqa*], instead of violating his own spiritual state, by conforming to the states of the other members of the congregation. If, on the other hand, he is simply an individual among the spiritual paupers [*fuqarā'*], the most graceful course for him to take, and the one best suited to his spiritual state, is for him to act in harmony with the state of the congregation. He should therefore revert to his tattered robe [*khirqa*], so as not to offend and embarrass the group, and thereby incur their displeasure. Then, later on, he should leave it behind for the other participants. That is the best course, though it is also permissible for him to hand it over to someone who was absent from the session.

⁂

Conclusion

This brings us to the end of the material we have managed to compile, briefly and succinctly, and under the constraints of time, concerning the modes of conduct *[ādāb]* proper to the people [of the Spiritual Path].

As for matters connected with admission to their guesthouses *[rubuṭ*, pl. of *ribāṭ]*, their water-bearing practices *[suqāyāt]*, their style of footwear, and various things they have invented, fashioned and named among themselves, those subjects are best explored by observing their actual practice, spending time in their company, and asking them to explain and demonstrate, so we have not recorded them in this section of the book. We have discussed most of these topics, however, in the section entitled The Book of Good Manners *[Kitāb al-Ādāb]*.[21]

We shall now conclude this book with a final chapter, devoted to the sacred stuggle *[mujāhada]*, absolute trust *[tawakkul]*, goodness of moral character *[husn al-khuluq]*, thankfulness *[shukr]*, patience *[ṣabr]*, contentment *[riḍā]*, and truthfulness *[sidq]*. These seven items form the foundation of this Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]*, and all of them are highly beneficial.

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[21] See Vol. 1, pp. 53–150 and 297–389.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Concerning the sacred struggle *[mujāhada]*.

As for the sacred struggle *[mujāhada]*, the basic guidance on the subject is contained in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And as for those	*wa 'lladhīna*
who strive in Our cause,	*jāhadū fī-nā*
surely We shall guide them	*la-nahdiyanna-hum*
in Our ways. (29:69)	*subula-nā.*

According to the report of Abū Nadra, it was Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "When Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asked to describe the most meritorious form of sacred combat *[jihād]*, he replied:

> 'A word of truth in the presence of a tyrannical ruler.'"

Abū Nadra added: "The eyes of Abū Sa'īd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) were filled with tears, [when he repeated these words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)].

Abū 'Alī ad-Daqqāq (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "If the servant adorns his outer being *[zāhir]* with sacred struggle *[mujāhada]*, Allāh will beautify his innermost faculties *[sarā'ir]* with direct perception *[mushāhada]*, for Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

And as for those	*wa 'lladhīna*
who strive in Our cause,	*jāhadū fī-nā*
surely We shall guide them	*la-nahdiyanna-hum*
in Our ways. (29:69)	*subula-nā*

—and if any seeker is not dedicated to sacred struggle *[sāhib mujāhada]* during his initial stage, he will never experience anything of value on the Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]*."

It was Abū 'Uthmān al-Maghribī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "If anyone supposes that anything will be opened up for him on this Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]*, or that anything connected with it will be revealed to him, without steadfast commitment to the sacred struggle *[mujāhada]*, he is seriously mistaken."

Abū 'Alī ad-Daqqāq (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "If someone does not perform a single act of standing up *[qawma]* during his initial stage, he will not experience a single act of sitting down *[jalsa]* in his final stage."

He also said (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "Movement is a blessing *[al-haraka baraka]*. The movements of the outer bodies *[ḥarakāt aẓ-ẓawāhir]* give rise to the blessings of the innermost beings *[barakāt as-sarā'ir]*."

According to al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alawiyya, it was Abū Yazīd (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "For twelve years I was the doorman of my lower self *[nafs]*, and for five years I was the mirror of my heart. Then I devoted one year to self-examination, and I noticed a girdle *[zunnār]*[22] around my waist, so I worked at cutting it loose for the next twelve years. Then I examined myself again, and noticed a girdle *[zunnār]* inside my inner being *[bāṭin]*, so I worked at cutting it loose for the next five years. I kept trying to see how I needed to do the cutting, until the answer dawned upon me. I looked at my fellow creatures, and saw them as dead, so I pronounced over them four *takbīrāt* [declarations of Allāh's Supreme Greatness]."[22a]

We are told that al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "I heard as-Sarī [as-Saqaṭī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) say: 'O all you young men, you must make serious efforts now, before you get to my age, for by then you will be too weak, and you will fall short, as I have fallen short.' At the time he said this, the young men were not joining him in worshipful service *['ibāda]*."

[22] The *zunnār*, a kind of girdle or waistband traditionally worn by non-Muslims (especially Christians) was often used by Islāmic authors as a symbol of imperfect faith. In the Forty-third Discourse of *The Sublime Revelation [al-Fatḥ ar-Rabbānī]*,* Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) says:

> There is nothing to be said until you cut the waistband *[zunnār]*, renew your Islām, truly repent with your heart, and leave the house of your natural urges *[ṭab']*, your passions *[hawā]*, your existence *[wujūd]*, and your efforts to attract benefit to you and repel harm from you.

(*See p. 278 of the edition published by Al-Baz.)

[22a] This a reference to the Islāmic funeral service *[aṣ-ṣalāt 'ala 'l-janāza]*. (For a detailed account thereof, see Vol. 4, pp. 272–80.)

It was al-Ḥasan al-Qazzāz (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "This business is built on three things: (1) that you do not eat, unless you really need to; (2) that you do not sleep, unless slumber overwhelms you; and (3) that you do not speak, except in response to an emergency."

Ibrāhīm ibn Ad'ham (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "A man will never attain to the degree of the righteous *[ṣāliḥīn]*, unless he traverses these six obstacles: First of all, he must lock the door of plenty, and open the door of hardship. Secondly, he must lock the door of dignity, and open the door of humility. Thirdly, he must lock the door of comfort, and open the door of strenuous effort. Fourthly, he must lock the door of sleep, and open the door of wakefulness. Fifthly, he must lock the door of wealth, and open the door of poverty. Sixthly, he must lock the door of hopeful expectation, and open the door of preparation for death."

Abū 'Umar ibn Najīd (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "If a person is honored by his own lower self *[nafs]*, his religion *[dīn]* will regard him as utterly insignificant."

It was Abū 'Alī ar-Rūdhbārī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "If, after five days, the Ṣūfī says: "I am hungry," you must confine him to the marketplace, and tell him to earn a livelihood."

Dhu'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "Allāh does not dignify a servant of His with any dignity more dignified in His sight, than when He guides him to self-humiliation. Nor does Allāh humiliate a servant of His with any humiliation more humiliating in His sight, than when He prevents him from practicing self-humiliation."

Ibrāhīm al-Khawwāṣ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "Whenever something terrifies me, I mount it like a riding animal."

It was Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "True comfort is freedom from the desires of the lower self *[nafs]*."

Manṣūr ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "I heard Abū 'Alī ar-Rūdhbārī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) say: 'Spiritual damage is caused by three things: (1) the sickness of the natural constitution *[ṭabī'a]*, (2) sticking to habitual custom

[ʿāda], and (3) keeping bad company *[ṣuḥba]*.' When I asked him: 'What is the sickness of the natural constitution?' he replied: 'The consumption of unlawful food *[ḥarām]*.' When I asked him: 'What is meant by sticking to habitual custom?' he replied: 'Looking at things that are unlawful *[ḥarām]*, and lending an ear to backbiting *[ghība]*.' When I asked him: 'What is keeping bad company?' he replied: 'Every time a lustful appetite arises in the lower self *[nafs]*, and you go along with it.'"

It was an-Nuṣrābādhī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Your prison is your own lower self *[nafs]*. As soon as you escape from it, you will alight in the comfort of eternity *[rāḥat al-abad]*."

Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Warrāq (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "In the early stages of our [spiritual] business, in the mosque *[masjid]* of Abū ʿUthmān, the most important of our principles *[aḥkām]* was that priority should be accorded to what was being freshly revealed to us *[yuftaḥu ʿalai-nā]*, and that we should not get stuck on anything familiar. If someone confronted us with something disagreeable, instead of trying to avenge ourselves on him, we had to be apologetic toward him, and relate to him with an attitude of modest humility. If a feeling of contempt for someone invaded our hearts, we had to stand ready to be of service to him."

The sacred struggle of the common folk *[mujāhadat al-ʿawāmm]* resides in the fulfillment of good deeds *[tawfiyat al-aʿmāl]*, whereas the sacred struggle of the special élite *[mujāhadat al-khawāṣṣ]* resides in the purification of spiritual states *[taṣfiyat al-aḥwāl]*. It is relatively easy to bear the hardship of hunger, thirst, and having to stay awake. What is really tough and difficult is applying the treatment necessary to correct bad moral habits.

◆

Concerning some of the spiritual dangers posed by the lower self *[āfāt an-nafs]*.

Among the spiritual dangers posed by the lower self *[āfāt an-nafs]*, one is its dependence on acquiring praise, a good reputation, and the approval of fellow creatures. To that end, it is even prepared to endure the burdens imposed by acts of worshipful service *[ʿibādāt]*. In order to do so, it must resort to ostentation *[riyāʾ]* and hypocrisy *[nifāq]*. The symptom of this is apparent in its return to laziness and indifference, as soon as the performance is over, along with the risk of criticism from other people.

You will not become clearly aware of the spiritual dangers posed by your lower self *[nafs]*, its polytheistic association *[shirk]*, its pretension and its falsehood, unless you undergo a process of intense examination and assessment, designed to probe the roots of its pretentious behavior. This is because it will speak in the manner of the fearful, as long as you are not compelled to experience fear, but if you need it [to respond correctly] in situations where fear is appropriate, you will find it feeling comfortably secure. It will speak in the manner of the righteous *[abrār]*, as long as you are not being tested for true devotion *[taqwā]*, but if you need it then, and call upon it to satisfy the preconditions of true devotion *[taqwā]*, you will find it polytheistic *[mushrika]*, hypocritically ostentatious *[murāʾiya]*, and vainly conceited *[muʿjaba]*. It will seem to fit the description of those who truly understand *[ʿārifīn]*, as long as you do not need to explain what something really means, but if you ask it to supply that information, you will find it telling lies. It will pretend to be one of those who are genuinely certain *[mūqinīn]* of their claim, as long as you are not tested for sincerity *[ikhlās]*. It will insist that it is one of those who are modestly unassuming *[mutawādiʿīn]*, as long as it is not presented with opposition to its passionate desire, in an anger-provoking situation.

It will likewise lay claim to generosity, magnanimity, altruism, liberality, affluence, chivalry [*futuwwa*], and other such praiseworthy characteristics—the characteristics of the saints [*auliyā'*], the spiritual deputies [*abdāl*],[23] and the spiritually eminent [*a'yān*]—from motives of desire, frivolity and foolishness. If you demand proof of all that, and put it to the test, you will find that it resembles nothing more than the mirage [*sarāb*] of an oasis, which the thirsty traveler supposes to be water, until he reaches it and finds that it is really nothing at all. If there had been any truthfulness [*sidq*] and sincerity [*ikhlāṣ*] present, if its word had indeed been correct, and its tongue had spoken the truth, it would not have put on a fancy display, designed to impress mere creatures, who have no power to cause it either harm or benefit. Its actions would have been appropriate, under the test conditions, and its words would have matched its deeds.

Abū Ḥafṣ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "The lower self [*nafs*] is total darkness, but for the lamp of its innermost being [*sirr*]—meaning sincere devotion [*ikhlāṣ*]—and the light of its lamp is enabling guidance [*tawfīq*]. So, if someone is not accompanied, in his innermost being, by enabling guidance from his Lord, his lower self is total darkness."

It was Abū 'Uthmān (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "No one can see his own fault, as long as he approves of anything connected with his lower self [*nafs*]. To be able to see his own fault, a person must view his lower self with deep suspicion, in all his states and circumstances."

Abū Ḥafṣ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) also said: "The swiftest of all people to perish is he who does not acknowledge his own fault, for sinful acts of disobedience are the postal service of unbelief [*barīd al-kufr*]."

Abū Sulaimān (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "Whenever I have been pleased with myself for doing something, I have been taken to task for it."

[23] *Abdāl* is the plural of *Badal*. In the Sixth Discourse of *Revelations of the Unseen*, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) gives the following explanation: "Annihilation [*fanā'*] is the aim and object, the final destination of the journey of the saints. This was the direction sought by all previous saints and *Abdāl*: to become extinct to their own will, and let the will of the Almighty and Glorious Truth take its place, as a permanent transformation, lasting until death. That is why they came to be called *Abdāl* [lit. 'substitutes'] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all)."

It was as-Sarī [as-Saqatī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "Beware of the protégés of the rich, the Qur'ān-reciters *[qurrā']* who frequent the marketplaces, and the scholarly experts *['ulamā']* who serve the worldly rulers."

Dhu'n-Nūn al-Misrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "Corruption has entered people's moral fiber by way of six things:

1. Weakness of the intention *[niyya]* to work for the sake of the hereafter.

2. Their physical bodies have been taken hostage by their carnal appetites.

3. Far-reaching expectation *[tūl al-amal]*, despite the nearness of the appointed term *[qurb al-ajal]*;

4. They have sought the approval of their fellow creatures, instead of the good pleasure of the Creator.

5. They have followed their desires, and discarded the exemplary practice of their Prophet *[Sunna Nabiyyi-him]* (Allāh bless him and give him peace), dumping it behind their backs.

6. They have pointed to a few mistakes committed by their righteous forebears *[salaf]*, as evidence to justify their own misconduct, while burying many of the noble exploits and virtues of their predecessors."

◆

Concerning the basic ingredient of the sacred struggle *[mujāhada]*.

The basic ingredient of the sacred struggle *[mujāhada]* is opposition to passionate desire *[hawā]*. The spiritual warrior must therefore wean his lower self *[nafs]* from familiar habits, carnal appetites, and the pleasures of the flesh. He must set it in opposition to whatever it may desire, at every moment in time. If it threatens to become engrossed in lustful appetites, he must restrain it with the reins of pious devotion *[taqwā]* and the fear of offending Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). If it is stubbornly obstinate, and stops short of performing acts of worshipful obedience *[ṭāʿāt]* and dutiful compliance *[muwāfaqāt]*, he must goad it with the whips of fear, opposition to desire, and the withholding of luxuries *[ḥuẓūẓ]*.

* * *

Concerning the vigilant awareness *[murāqaba]* that is essential to the fulfillment of the sacred struggle *[mujāhada]*.

The sacred struggle *[mujāhada]* cannot be complete without vigilant awareness *[murāqaba]*. It was to this that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) implicitly referred, when he asked Gabriel *[Jibrīl]* (peace be upon him) to explain the meaning of active goodness *[iḥsān]*, and he replied: "Active goodness *[iḥsān]* means that you must worship Allāh as if you could see Him, for, if you do not see Him, He certainly sees you."

Vigilant awareness *[murāqaba]* is the servant's recognition of the fact that he is always under the scrutinizing gaze of the Lord (Glory be to Him). When he maintains that recognition constantly, he is practicing vigilant awareness *[murāqaba]* of his Lord, and this is the root of all goodness. The servant only attains to this degree after self-examination *[muḥāsaba]*, timely correction of his spiritual state, strict adherence to the path of Truth *[ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq]*, maintaining good relations between the heart and Allāh (Exalted is He), and taking care of every breath he breathes in the company of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). He must realize that Allāh (Exalted is He) is Watching *[Raqīb]* over him, and that He is Near *[Qarīb]* to his heart, so that He knows his spiritual states, observes his actions, and hears his words.

Before your vigilance can be complete, you must also be thoroughly familiar with four kinds of direct experience *[ma'rifa]*, namely:

1. Direct experience of Allāh (Exalted is He).
2. Direct experience of Iblīs, the enemy of Allāh.
3. Direct experience of your own lower self *[nafs]*, the inciter to evil *[al-ammāra bi's-sū']*.
4. Direct experience of working for the sake of Allāh (Exalted is He).

them broader opportunities, for, "the guest arrives with a blessing, and carries away the sins of the household," as we are told in the traditional saying [*ḥadīth*].

• If someone invites the spiritual pauper [*faqīr*] to a meal, when he has dependents to look after, and he does not have anything to improve their situation, it is not part of the code of chivalry [*futuwwa*] that he should neglect his dependents, go off to accept the invitation, and treat his own appetite as more important than the dire need of his dependents. Nor is it in keeping with the Spiritual Path [*Ṭarīqa*] and the Sacred Law [*Sharī'a*] to subject one's dependents to misery and disappointment, because of an invitation. He should therefore refrain from attending, and stay patiently at home with his family. If the person who issues the invitation has any chivalry [*futuwwa*] inside him, and he knows that the invited guest has dependents in his care, it is incumbent upon him to do more than ask him to attend in person. He must relieve the guest's heart of concern for his dependents, by sending them enough to satisfy their needs, and by letting his guest know that he is doing so.

• It is the duty of the spiritual pauper [*faqīr*] to train his family to adhere to the outer aspect of religious knowledge [*ẓāhir al-'ilm*] and the Sacred Law [*Sharī'a*], and to ensure that they do not act contrary to religious knowledge, whether seldom or often.

• He must not consign his children to the marketplace, and the study of business crafts. He should rather teach them the rules and principles of the religion [*aḥkām ad-dīn*], and induce them to abstain from the pursuit of worldly interests. This does not apply, however, if he is overwhelmed by poverty, lack of patience, vulnerability, degradation, and dependence on his fellow creatures for food and everything else he needs. In such a case, it is necessary for his whole family—his wife, his children and himself—to concentrate on earning, on acquiring the means to gain independence from other people, while keeping within the limits [prescribed by the sacred law], for he should be more virtuous than others.

• He must make his children aware of the duty to respect the right of parents [*ḥaqq al-wālidain*], and to avoid undutiful behavior [*'uqūq*] toward them.[15]

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[15] As explained in an earlier section of the present work:

Undutiful treatment of one's parents [*'uqūq al-wālidain*] ... may mean any or all of the following: failing to respect their solemn warnings, striking them when they speak to you reproachfully, refusing to give them something when they ask you for it, or refusing to feed them when they are hungry and begging you to feed them. (See Vol. 2, p. 110.)

Direct experience *[ma'rifa]* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

As for the direct experience *[ma'rifa]* of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), the servant can only obtain it by keeping his heart focused on His nearness (Almighty and Glorious is He), His control over him, His power over him, His witnessing of him, and His knowledge of him, never letting it forget that:

- He is an Ever-Watchful Guardian *[Raqīb Ḥafīẓ]*, a Glorious Being *[Wājid Mājid]*, One who has no partner in His Dominion *[Mulk]*.
- He is always Truthful *[Ṣādiq]* when He makes a promise, Loyal *[Wāfin]* when he gives a guarantee, and Opulent *[Malī']* when He is appealed to and petitioned.
- He has a promise *[wa'd]* that He will surely carry out, and an honest threat *[wa'īd]* that He will surely implement.
- He has an abode to which all His creatures must come, and a source from which he disposes freely.
- He has the power to reward and to punish.
- He has no likeness and no equal.
- He is Protective *[Kāfīn]*, Compassionate *[Raḥīm]*, Loving *[Wadūd]*, All-Hearing *[Samī']*, and All-Knowing *['Alīm]*.
- Every day, He is about some awesome business *[Huwa fī sha'n]*.
- No business distracts Him from any other business.
- His knowledge extends to what is concealed *[khafī]*, and beyond what is concealed, for He knows and understands the hidden conscience *[ḍamīr]*, the secret thoughts *[khaṭarāt]*, the devilish insinuation *[waswasa]*, the ambitious aspiration *[himma]*, the wish and intention *[irāda]*, the wicked temptation *[waswās]*, the motion *[ḥaraka]*, the blink *[ṭarfa]*, the wink *[ghamza]*, and the click in the throat *[hamza]*, as well as everything higher and lower on the scale, including things too subtle for us to identify, and too sublime for us to describe, whether they have already happened, or have yet to come into being.

- He is All-Glorious *[ʿAzīz]*, All-Wise *[Ḥakīm]*.[24]

The servant must therefore instill this in his heart, through deep-rooted certainty and beneficial action, and it must also be instilled in every limb and organ of his body, in every joint, every vein, every nerve, every hair, and every patch of skin. He must likewise be convinced that Allāh (Exalted is He) is supervising the whole process, in full awareness of it, for He surrounds him with a knowledge that no detail can escape. He must be convinced that He created him, and created him well, and that He formed him, and formed him well.

Once all of that is firmly established in his heart, so that his commitment to it is unshakable, his understanding is complete, and self-examination *[muḥāsaba]* has become a constant process within him, he will then receive the direct experience *[maʿrifa]*, the proof will present itself to him, and he will occupy a noble station with respect to Allāh.

He must be convinced that protection accompanies him in all of this, so his physical organs and his heart are safeguarded. He will obtain nothing from this whole endeavor, unless he abandons all concerns, apart from that which led him to embark upon it in the first place. He must not detach himself from his heart, in order to be on guard against frightening dangers, because His power will take care of him now, as it has in the past, and because of a sense of shame toward Him, on account of His nearness. He must realize that no wish, intention or thought occurs to him, without His knowing all about it.

He will thus become that knowledgeable expert *[ʿālim]* who practices what Allāh loves, and abstains from what He loathes. He will not give expression to a thought, a glance, a notion, a wish, or a movement, unless the knowledge *[ʿilm]* of Allāh is with him, present in his heart, before he expresses any thoughts, or movements, or ideas. This is the spiritual station of those who are well versed in the knowledge of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), those who are afraid of His displeasure, those who learn by direct experience *[ʿārifīn]*, those who are truly devout *[atqiyāʾ]*, and those who exercise pious restraint *[wariʿīn]*.

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[24] At this point in the Arabic text, the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) reminds the reader: "We have already provided a full account of this whole subject, in the chapter concerning the knowledge of the Creator *[maʿrifat aṣ-Ṣāniʿ]*." (See Vol. 1, pp. 171–294.)

Direct experience *[maʿrifa]* of Iblīs.

As for the direct experience *[maʿrifa]* of Allāh's enemy, Iblīs, Allāh (Exalted is He) has commanded His servants to wage war on him and struggle against him, in private and in public, whether they are in a state of worshipful obedience, or in a state of sin. Allāh has informed His servants that Iblīs displayed hostility toward Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), in relation to Adam (peace be upon him), His servant, His Prophet *[Nabī]*, His chosen friend *[ṣafī]*, and His deputy *[khalīfa]* on the earth, and that he injured him by harming his offspring. He has informed them that Iblīs does not sleep, when the human being *[ādamī]* is asleep, that he does not become absent-minded, when the human being is absent-minded, and that he does not lose consciousness, when the human being loses consciousness, during his sleep or while he is awake.

Iblīs is dedicated to the ruination and destruction of the human being. He misses no opportunity to cheat, deceive and trick him, and his snares are the lustful appetites, which tempt both the pious and the sinful. His real purpose is unknown to many of the creatures of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), including those worshipful servants who are deluded and deceived, as well as many of those who are heedless. The real object of his desire is not merely to lure the human being *[ibn Ādam]* into sinful disobedience, or hypocritical display *[riyāʾ]*, or vain conceit. His real purpose is to take the son of Adam back home with him to Hell *[Jahannam]*. As Allāh (Glorious and Exalted is He) has told us:

[The Devil] summons his party only	*innamā yadʿū*
that they may be	*ḥizba-hu*
among the inhabitants	*li-yakūnū*
of the blazing inferno. (35:6)	*min aṣḥābi 's-saʿīr.*

Once the servant has truly recognized *[ʿarafa]* Iblīs in this capacity, it is therefore incumbent upon him to instill that direct experience *[ma'rifa]* in his heart, as a real and profound awareness, with no trace of heedlessness or absent-mindedness. He must wage all-out war on him, and engage in the sacred struggle *[mujāhada]* against him, with the utmost intensity, in private and in public, outwardly and inwardly. He must pursue this without respite, so that he spares no effort in his combat with him, and in his struggle to resist whatever temptation he may offer, whether it be good or evil.

He must not refrain from appealing to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), seeking refuge with Him, and asking Him for help in all his operations and maneuvers, so that He will assist him against the foe. He must show Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) that he admits his own inadequacy, and his urgent need of Him, for there is no effective strategy *[ḥīla]*, nor any strength, except through Him. He must seek the aid of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) through weeping and entreaty, and beg Him for support against the foe, in all earnestness and humility, by night and by day, inwardly and outwardly, in private and in public.

His struggle will thus become less daunting in his sight, due to his familiarity *[ma'rifa]* with the foe, obtained through the enabling guidance *[tawfīq]* of Allāh (Exalted is He), for Iblīs is the enemy of his Master *[Maulā]*. Of all His creatures, he was the first to disobey Allāh. Of all His creatures, meaning all those disobey Him, he was also the first to die, for everyone who disobeys Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) is dead. As we learn from the tradition *[hadīth]*, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

> The first to die, of all My creatures, was Iblīs.

Iblīs has also directed his hostility toward the saints *[awliyā']* of Allāh, including the Prophets *[Anbiyā']*, the champions of truth *[siddīqīn]*, and His chosen friends *[asfiyā']* among all of His creatures.

The servant must know and understand that he is engaged in a tremendous holy war *[jihād]*, that he is in a state of nearness to the Lord (Glorious is His Splendor), and that the honor of his station cannot be described. He must therefore remain steadfast, and not weaken, for if he grows weak or weary, his likely to disobey his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), fall into Hell *[Jahannam]*, and incur the wrath of Allāh. He may grant Allāh's enemy what he wishes from him, and strengthen Allāh's curse upon him.

Iblīs has no purpose, object or goal, with regard to the servant [of the Lord], other than disbelief *[kufr]* in Allāh. He simply transports him from one state to another, until Allāh becomes angry with him. Then he leaves him to his own devices, so he perishes, and falls into the Fire of Hell, in the company of Satan *[ash-Shaiṭān]*. No other creature treats the servant more harshly than he does. So beware, beware! The only alternatives are ending in destruction, or salvation through the grace and mercy of Allāh.

May Allāh grant refuge to us, and to all the Muslims, from the wickedness of Iblīs and his troops. There is no might, nor any power, except with Allāh, the All-High, the Almighty *[lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā bi'llāhi 'l-'Aliyyi 'l-'Aẓīm]*.

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Direct experience *[ma‘rifa]* of the self that is always inciting to evil *[an-nafs al-ammāra bi’s-sū’]*.

As for direct experience *[ma‘rifa]* of the self that is always inciting to evil *[an-nafs al-ammāra bi’s-sū’]*, it means that the servant must put that self where Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has put it, describe it as Allāh (Exalted is He) has described it, and treat it as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has commanded him to treat it, for it is even more hostile toward him than Iblīs himself. Iblīs depends on it, and its willingness to accept his control, as the only means by which he can influence him.

The servant must therefore learn by experience to identify its natural constitution, its aim and purpose, and the end to which it is directing him, by inducement and incitement. He must recognize how weak is its moral character, and how strong its greedy ambition and arrogant presumption. It has no interest in obedience to Allāh (Glory be to Him), but only in possessiveness and wishfulness. The only fear it knows is actually a false sense of security *[amn]*, and its hope is pinned on nothing but desires *[amānī]*. Its honesty is untruthful, and its claim is null and void. Everything about it is deceptive, nothing it does is worthy of praise, and nothing it claims is ever true, so he must not be deluded by anything it manifests to him, nor must he share the hopes it entertains.

If he loosens its shackles, it will run amok. If he unties its fetters, it will bolt. If he gives it whatever it asks for, it will perish. If he neglects to keep it under close examination *[muhāsaba]*, it will slip away. If he is incapable of subjecting it to opposition, it will drown. If he gives free rein to its passionate desire, it will head for the Fire of Hell, and tumble into its flames. It has no sense of reality *[haqīqa]*, and no recourse to anything good. It is the prime cause of misfortune, the main source of degradation, the treasure house of Iblīs, and the refuge of everying bad.

No one really knows and understands it, other than its Creator (Almighty and Glorious is He), for it exists in the capacity assigned to it by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). Whenever it manifests a kind of fear, it is actually feeling a sense of security. Whenever it claims that something is true, it is actually false. Whenever it refers to its own sincerity *[ikhlāṣ]*, it is actually a display of hypocrisy *[riyā']* and vain conceit, for when the facts are presented, and their truth is evident, its falsehood can be recognized. When put to the test, it reverts to its pretension.

There is no grave misfortune that has not occurred because of it, so the servant must subject it to examination *[muḥāsaba]*, vigilant awareness *[murāqaba]*, opposition *[mukhālafa]*, and dedicated struggle *[mujāhada]*, with regard to everything it promotes and becomes involved in. No claim it makes is ever true. It is simply striving to achieve its own destruction and ruination. Whenever something is attributed to it, there is always more to it than what has been described, for it is the treasure of Iblīs, his place of comfort, his entertainer, his conversation partner, and his friend. Once the servant is fully aware of its character, so that he really knows and understands it, he will find it easy to deal with, and he will have it under control, with the help of Allāh (Exalted is He).

When the servant has acquired these three good habits,[25] he must ask Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) for help in maintaining them. He must not be negligent, and he must not obey his own lower self *[nafs]*, because if he succeeds in training his lower self, and denying it what it desires, he will go on to master all the good habits, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills.

He must therefore accord priority to firm reliance on Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), Alone without partner. He must not incline, in all of this, toward anyone but Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), for if he does that, he will not achieve a good result, and Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will leave him to his own devices. It is therefore incumbent upon him to seek help from Allāh (Exalted is He) in all of this, and to win His approval by doing whatever Allāh commands him to do, and refraining from whatever He forbids him to do.

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[25] That is to say, the three habits mentioned above, in the paragraph beginning: "As for direct experience of the self...."

His object must be to please no one but Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), for then Allāh will guide him, assist him, love him, shield him from the things he hates, and cover him with the protection of His chosen friends *[asfiyā']*, those who are well versed in the knowledge of Allāh, because through this very process they have attained to the knowledge of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

him) who said: "If anyone supposes that anything will be opened up for him on this Spiritual Path *[Ṭarīqa]*, or that anything connected with it will be revealed to him, without steadfast commitment to the sacred struggle *[mujāhada]*, he is seriously mistaken."

Abū ʿAlī ad-Daqqāq (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "If someone does not perform a single act of standing up *[qawma]* during his initial stage, he will not experience a single act of sitting down *[jalsa]* in his final stage."

He also said (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "Movement is a blessing *[al-haraka baraka]*. The movements of the outer bodies *[ḥarakāt aẓ-ẓawāhir]* give rise to the blessings of the innermost beings *[barakāt as-sarāʾir]*."

According to al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlawiyya, it was Abū Yazīd (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "For twelve years I was the doorman of my lower self *[nafs]*, and for five years I was the mirror of my heart. Then I devoted one year to self-examination, and I noticed a girdle *[zunnār]*[22] around my waist, so I worked at cutting it loose for the next twelve years. Then I examined myself again, and noticed a girdle *[zunnār]* inside my inner being *[bāṭin]*, so I worked at cutting it loose for the next five years. I kept trying to see how I needed to do the cutting, until the answer dawned upon me. I looked at my fellow creatures, and saw them as dead, so I pronounced over them four *takbīrāt* [declarations of Allāh's Supreme Greatness]."[22a]

We are told that al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "I heard as-Sarī [as-Saqaṭī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) say: 'O all you young men, you must make serious efforts now, before you get to my age, for by then you will be too weak, and you will fall short, as I have fallen short.' At the time he said this, the young men were not joining him in worshipful service *[ʿibāda]*."

[22] The *zunnār*, a kind of girdle or waistband traditionally worn by non-Muslims (especially Christians) was often used by Islāmic authors as a symbol of imperfect faith. In the Forty-third Discourse of *The Sublime Revelation [al-Fatḥ ar-Rabbānī]*,* Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) says:

> There is nothing to be said until you cut the waistband *[zunnār]*, renew your Islām, truly repent with your heart, and leave the house of your natural urges *[ṭabʿ]*, your passions *[hawā]*, your existence *[wujūd]*, and your efforts to attract benefit to you and repel harm from you.

(*See p. 278 of the edition published by Al-Baz.)

[22a] This a reference to the Islāmic funeral service *[as-ṣalāt ʿala 'l-janāza]*. (For a detailed account thereof, see Vol. 4, pp. 272–80.)

Direct experience *[maʿrifa]* of working for the sake of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

As for working for the sake of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), it means that the servant must know and understand that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has commanded him to do certain things, and that He has forbidden him to do certain things. That which He has commanded him to practice is worshipful obedience *[ṭāʿa]*, and that which He has forbidden him to perpetrate is sinful disobedience toward Him (Almighty and Glorious is He). He has also commanded him to practice sincere devotion *[ikhlās]* in both cases, and to follow the path of right guidance *[hudā]*, in accordance with the Book [of Allāh] and the Sunna [the exemplary practice of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)].

In everything the servant does, his conscience *[damīr]* must be clear of everything other than Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). He must not be one of those who abstain from external acts of disobedience, but refuse to abstain from internal acts of disobedience, which are the mothers of all sins *[ummahāt adh-dhunūb]*, and the roots from which they spring, because Allāh (Exalted is He) is not bound by any promise of forgiveness, in that case, nor by any guarantee of reward in the abode of recompense [in the hereafter].

It is therefore pointless for the servant to apply great effort to the external performance of worshipful service *[ʿibāda]*, while the intention *[niyya]* is invalid and the purpose is unsound, for all his apparently worshipful obedience is thereby converted into sinful disobedience. This will bring him nothing but the punishments of this world and the hereafter, along with physical exhaustion, little wish-fulfillment, and the forsaking of carnal appetite and pleasure, so he will lose both this world and the hereafter.

He must rather adorn his worshipful obedience with sincerity *[ikhlāṣ]*, the apparent virtue of lengthy night vigil [*qiyām*], frequent fasting [*ṣiyām*], and external performance of supererogatory devotions [*nawāfil*], when he has no real understanding [*maʿrifa*] of these practices.

If he takes all this advice, and considers his action with the understanding obtained through direct experience [*maʿrifa*] of his own lower self [*nafs*], of his Lord [*Rabb*], and of His enemy, his action will be correct, for he will thus be endowed with real knowledge [*ʿilm*] and comprehension [*fiqh*]. Whenever he contemplates an action, be it external [*ẓāhir*] or internal [*bāṭin*], he must check to see whether it is intended for the sake of Allāh, sincerely and truthfully, for only then will Allāh accept it of him, and reward him for it. If it is not performed for His sake alone, He will send it back to him, for no such action reaches Him unnoticed, and nothing is hidden from Him.

If the servant acts on this advice, he will be granted every good attribute of character, his intelligence [*ʿaql*] will be sound and correct, his work will be firmly based, his discernment [*ḥilm*] will increase, and he will be included among the saints [*awliyāʾ*] and chosen friends [*aṣfiyāʾ*] of Allāh, among those who see because of Allāh, speak because of Allāh, receive because of Him, and give because of Him. At the same time, he must always be suspicious of his own lower self [*nafs*], suspicious of his passionate desire [*hawā*], in personal matters and with regard to his religion [*dīn*], and suspicious of Iblīs. Then, in addition to all of that, he must be suspicious of his self-knowledge, as it relates to his direct experience [*maʿrifa*] of his own lower self [*nafs*].

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Allāh (Exalted is He) will thereupon expand his feelings and purify his mind. He will reach the point where lying strikes him as intolerable. If he hears it from someone else, he will reproach and rebuke him for it within himself. If he prays for the person to be rid of it, he will thereby earn a spiritual reward.

3. He must beware of promising something to someone, and then failing to keep his promise, when he is capable of fulfilling it, unless he has an obviously valid excuse. He would do better to stop making promises altogether. This accords more strongly with his main concern, and is more appropriate to his path *[tarīq]*, since breach of promise is tantamount to lying. If he acts on this advice, the door of generous favor will be opened unto him, and he will attain to the degree of humble modesty *[ḥayā']*. He will be granted loving affection in the company of the truthful *[ṣādiqīn]*, and higher esteem in the sight of Allāh (Exalted be His praise).

4. He must refrain from cursing anything in the whole of creation, or hurting anything from a mere atom upward. This is one of the moral standards of the righteous *[abrār]* and the truthful *[ṣādiqīn]*. It yields a good result for one who observes it, in that he enjoys Allāh's protection in this world, along with the spiritual degrees He has in store for him, and He delivers him from the pitfalls of perdition, keeps him safe from his fellow creatures, blesses him with human compassion, and brings him near to Himself (Almighty and Glorious is He).

5. He must refrain from invoking evil on any of his fellow creatures, even one who has done him wrong. He must not cut him with his tongue, nor act in ways designed to pay him back. He must respond with tolerant forbearance, for the sake of Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He), and not retaliate against him in word or deed, for these good habits *[khiṣāl]* will promote their practitioner to the high degrees. If he cultivates them, he will thereby attain to noble status, in this world and the hereafter. He will gain love and affection in the hearts of all his fellow creatures, near and far. He will receive a positive response to his supplication *[da'wa]*, exaltation in goodness, and the greatest respect in this world, in the hearts of all true believers *[mu'minīn]*.

6. He must not not assert that he has evidence of polytheistic association *[shirk]*, unbelief *[kufr]* or hypocrisy *[nifāq]* on the part of any member of the Muslim community ["people of the *Qibla*"]. Such

restraint is closer to merciful compassion *[raḥma]* and higher in spiritual degree. It is perfectly in keeping with the Sunna [the exemplary practice of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)]. It is farthest from presumptuous intrusion upon the knowledge *['ilm]* of Allāh (Glory be to Him, and Exalted is He), farthest from the displeasure of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and closest to the good pleasure and merciful compassion of Allāh (Exalted is He). It is therefore an honorable and noble gateway to Allāh. May He endow His servant with compassion for all His creatures!

7. He must refrain from directing his attention and interest toward any form of sinful disobedience, both outwardly and inwardly, and he must restrain all his limbs and organs from participating in them. Such efforts bring the quickest reward to heart and body in the present life of this world, as well as the good things Allāh holds in store in the hereafter. We beg Allāh (Exalted is He) to favor us all with the ability to put these good habits into practice, and to expel our base desires from our hearts!

8. He must refrain from inflicting any burden or inconvenience, be it small or great, on any of his fellow creatures. He must rather relieve all his fellow creatures of any inconvenience he might cause them, regardless of what he needs or can do without, since this is the height of honor for worshipful servants *['ābidīn]*, and of nobility for the truly devout *[muttaqīn]*. From this he gains strength to fulfill his duty to enjoin what is right and fair *[al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf]*, and forbid what is wrong and unfair *[an-nahy 'ani'l-munkar]*.[28] All his fellow creatures should be of one status in his sight, endowed with the right *[ḥaqq]* to equal justice.

If he conducts himself accordingly, Allāh (Exalted is He) will transport him to the realm of transcendence *[fanā']*, certitude, and confidence in Him (Almighty and Glorious is He). He does not promote anyone because of his desire, and all human beings are entitled to equal justice in His sight. This is quite certainly the cause of honor for the believers and of nobility for the righteous, and it is the nearest doorway to sincere devotion *[ikhlāṣ]*.

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[28] For an extensive account of the duty to enjoin that which is right and fair *[al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf]*, and forbid that which is wrong and unfair *[an-nahy 'ani'l-munkar]*, see Vol. 1, pp. 151–70.

9. He must stop expecting human beings to satisfy his greed, and not let himself covet what they have at their disposal. Thus he will achieve the greatest honor, peculiar enrichment, vast dominion, splendid glory, pure certitude, and frank, unequivocal trust *[tawakkul]* in the Lord. This is one of the doors to confidence in Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). It is also one of the doors to abstinence *[zuhd]*. It is the means by which he can attain to pious caution *[wara']*, and perfect his performance of religious duties *[nusuk]*. It is one of the distinctive features of those who are wholly dedicated to Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He).

10. The tenth good habit *[khasla]* is modest humility *[tawāḍu']*, because that is the means by which he can construct the splendor of his degree, exalt his station, perfect his dignity and elevation, in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He) and in the eyes of his fellow creatures, and accomplish what he wishes to achieve, in this world and the hereafter. This good habit *[khaṣla]* is the root, branch and consummation of all acts of worshipful obedience *[ṭā'āt]*. It is the means by which the servant [of the Lord] can attain to the stations of the righteous *[ṣāliḥīn]*, of those who are well pleased *[rāḍīn]* with Allāh (Exalted is He), in hardship and prosperity alike. This is the perfection of piety *[taqwā]*. Modest humility *[tawāḍu']* means that the servant never meets any of his fellow human beings, without seeing that person as having some merit superior to his own. He will always say: "Perhaps he is better than I, in the sight of Allāh, and higher in degree." If he meets someone junior to himself, he will say: "This person has not sinned against Allāh, whereas I have sinfully disobeyed Him." If he meets someone senior, he will say: "This person has served Allāh before me." If he meets a learned scholar *['ālim]*, he will say: "This person has been endowed with something I have not achieved, and he has attained to something I have not acquired. He has learned something of which I am ignorant, and he puts knowledge into practice." If he meets an ignorant individual, he will say: "This person has sinned against Allāh in ignorance, whereas I have sinned against Him in full knowledge. I do not know what the final verdict on him will be, nor what it will be in my own case." If he meets an unbeliever *[kāfir]*, he will say: "I do not know. Maybe this person will accept Islām, and receive the stamp of approval for his good conduct. Maybe I shall turn to unbelief, and be condemned for my bad behavior."

This is the gate of tender loving care *[shafaqa]* and fearful apprehension *[wajal]*, and it is both the first and the final challenge presented to the servants [of the Lord]. If the servant conducts himself in the manner we have described, Allāh will keep him safe from the perils and dangers. He will thereby attain to the stations of those who give sincere advice *[nasīha]* for the sake of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). He will come to be included among the chosen friends *[asfiyā']* and loved ones *[ahbāb]* of the All-Merciful *[ar-Rahmān]*. He will be numbered among the enemies of Iblīs,[29] the enemy of Allāh (may Allāh curse him).

It is also the gate of merciful compassion *[rahma]*. In order to reach it, the servant must have cut the road of arrogant pride, and the cords of vain conceit. He must have abandoned the degree of loftiness, and avoided the degree of self-glorification, in the sphere of religion *[dīn]*, in worldly matters, and with respect to the hereafter. It is the marrow of worshipful service *[mukhkh al-'ibāda]*, the ultimate honor of the pious abstainers *[zāhidīn]*, and the emblem of the reclusive devotees *[nāsikīn]*. In other words, there is nothing superior to it.

The servant must now prevent his tongue from discussing human beings and matters of no importance, otherwise he will accomplish nothing. In all his conditions and circumstances, he must rid his heart of every trace of malice, rebelliousness, and arrogant pride. In private and in public, his tongue must be one and the same. In private and in public, his desire must be one and the same, as must his manner of speaking. When it comes to giving sincere advice *[nasīha]*, all his fellow creatures must be one in his sight. He must not be someone who gives advice, yet speaks ill of one of Allāh's creatures, or acts offensively toward him, or loves to listen to evil rumors, or takes delight in hearing wicked talk, for this spells the ruin of the worshipful *['ābidīn]*, the destruction of the reclusive devotees *[nāsikīn]*, and the perdition of the pious abstainers *[zāhidīn]*—apart from anyone whom Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) assists, through His mercy, to safeguard his tongue and his heart.

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[29] Iblīs is the personal name of the Devil. Some Western scholars consider it to be an arabicized version of the Greek diabolos, but the Arab philologists derive it from the root *b-l-s*, on the grounds that Iblīs "has nothing to expect *[ablasa]* from the mercy of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)." He is also called *ash-Shaitān* [Satan, the Devil], *'aduww Allāh* [the enemy of God] or simply *al-'aduww* [the Enemy]. Unlike the English word Satan, however, *ash-Shaitān* is not strictly speaking a proper name, as A.J. Wensinck points out in his article IBLIS in the *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*. (See also: T.P. Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, art. DEVIL).

Concerning some of the most important virtues, namely:

1. Absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*.
2. Goodness of moral character *[husn al-khuluq]*.
3. Thankfulness *[shukr]*.
4. Patience *[ṣabr]*.
5. Contentment *[riḍā]*.
6. Truthfulness *[ṣidq]*.

1.
Concerning absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*.

As for putting all one's trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*, the basic guidance on the subject is contained in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And when someone puts all his trust in Allāh, He will be enough for him. (65:3)	*wa man yatawakkal* *'ala 'llāhi fa-Huwa hasbu-h.*

—and in His words (Exalted is He):

And put all your trust [in Allāh], if you are indeed believers. (5:23)	*wa 'ala 'llāhi fa-tawakkalū* *in kuntum mu'minīn.*

According to a traditional report, transmitted on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd[10] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> I saw the religious communities *[umam]* at the gathering place *[mawsim]*, and I noticed that my Community *[Ummatī]* filled both the plain and the mountainside, so I was astonished at their number and their condition. I was asked: "Are you well pleased?" "Yes," said I. Then I was told: "Together with these, seventy thousand will enter the Garden of Paradise without undergoing any reckoning. They do not play with fire. They do not look for bad omens. They do not practice subterfuge. They put all their trust in their Lord."

On hearing this, 'Ukāsha ibn Mihsan al-Asadī stood up and said: "O Messenger of Allāh, appeal to Allāh that He may include me among them!" So Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: "O Allāh, let him be included among them!" Then someone else jumped up and said: "Appeal to Allāh that He may include me among them!" To this he responded (Allāh bless him and give him peace) by saying: "'Ukāsha has arrived there ahead of you!"

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[10] Abū 'Abd ar-Rahmān 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd al-Hudhalī (may Allāh be well pleased with him). One of the earliest and closest Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). A man of lowly antecedents, he became an authority on the recitation and interpretation of the Qur'ān, as well as an expert on Islamic law and the Prophetic tradition. He died in A.H. 32 or 33.

The real meaning *[ḥaqīqa]* of absolute trust *[tawakkul]* is delegating all one's affairs to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), making a clean escape from the murky darkness and gloom of personal choice and self-management, and advancing to the arenas where the [divine] decrees *[aḥkām]* and foreordainment *[taqdīr]* are experienced directly.

The servant [of the Lord] must be convinced that there is no possibility of changing the allotment of destiny *[qisma]*, which means that whatever has been allotted to him cannot pass him by, and that he can never obtain what has not been allotted to him. His heart will then become reconciled to this, and he will feel confident in relying on the promise *[wa'd]*[31] of his Master *[Maulā]*. He will therefore receive from his Master *[Maulā]*.

Putting one's trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]* is actually the first of three stages, namely: (1) the basic sense of trust *[tawakkul]*, then (2) the act of surrender or resignation *[taslīm]*, and then (3) the act of delegation *[tafwīḍ]*. The person who is at the stage of basic trust *[al-mutawakkil]* is one who feels confident in relying on the promise *[wa'd]* of his Lord. The person who is at the stage of surrender or resignation *[ṣāḥib at-taslīm]* is one who is content to rely on His knowledge *['ilm]*. The person who is at the stage of delegation *[ṣāḥib at-tafwīḍ]* is one who is happy to accept His judgment *[ḥukm]*.

There are many wise sayings on this subject, for instance:

"Trust is an initial stage *[at-tawakkul bidāya]*, surrender or resignation is a middle stage *[at-taslīm wasaṭ]*, and delegation is a final stage *[at-tafwīḍ nihāya]*."

"Trust is the attribute of the believers *[at-tawakkul ṣifat al-mu'minīn]*, surrender or resignation is the attribute of the saints *[at-taslīm ṣifat al-awliyā']*, and delegation is the attribute of those who realize and affirm the Divine Oneness *[at-tafwīḍ ṣifat al-muwaḥḥidīn]*."

"Trust is the attribute of the common folk *[at-tawakkul ṣifat al-'awāmm]*, surrender or resignation is the attribute of the élite *[at-taslīm ṣifat al-khawāṣṣ]*, and delegation is the attribute of the élite of the élite *[at-tafwīḍ ṣifat khawāṣṣ al-khawāṣṣ]*."

"Trust is the attribute of the Prophets *[at-tawakkul ṣifat al-Anbiyā']*, surrender or resignation is the attribute of Abraham *[at-taslīm ṣifat*

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[31] That is to say, the promise of blissful reward in the Hereafter. Allāh (Exalted is He) has emphasized the truthfulness of His promise *[wa'd]* in Q. 31.33, and of His threat *[wa'īd]* in Q. 50:12–14.

and consciously aware	*wa bi-hādha 'l-*
of this certitude,	*yaqīni 'ārifīn*
and ready to acknowledge	*wa bi-hādhihi 'l-*
this awareness,	*ma'rifa mu'tarifīn*
and penitent	*wa bi-hādha 'l-*
through this acknowledgment,	*i'tirāfi munībīn*
and successful	*wa bi-hādhihi 'l-*
because of this repentance.	*ināba fā'izīn:*
May we be eager	*wa fī-mā*
for that which is close to You,	*ladai-ka rāghibīn:*
and seekers	*wa li-mā*
of that which is in Your presence.	*'inda-ka ṭālibīn:*
May You justly vaunt our worth	*wa bāhi*
to the noble	*bi-na 'l-malā'ikata 'l-*
recording angels.[530]	*kirāma 'l-kātibīn:*
Resurrect us in the company of	*wa 'ḥshur-nā*
the Prophets	*ma'a 'n-nabiyyīna*
and the champions of truth,	*wa 'ṣ-ṣiddīqīn:*
and the martyrs	*wa 'sh-shuhadā'i 'ṣ-*
and the righteous.[531]	*ṣāliḥīn:*
Let us not be included	*wa lā taj'al-nā*
among those	*min-mani*
whom the devils seduce,	*'stahwat-hu 'sh-shayāṭīn:*
distracting them	*fa-shaghalat-hu*
from their religious duty,	*'ani 'd-dīn:*
so that they come to be	*fa-aṣbaḥa*
among the remorseful,	*mina 'n-nādimīn:*
and in the Hereafter	*wa fi 'l-ākhirati*
among the losers.	*mina 'l-khāsirīn:*
Grant us eternal life	*wa awjib la-na 'l-khulūda*
in the Gardens of bliss,	*fī jannāti 'n-na'īm:*
through Your Mercy,	*bi-raḥmati-ka*
O Most Merciful of the merciful!	*yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn*
O Allāh, to You be the praise,	*Allāhumma la-ka 'l-ḥamd*
for Worthy of praise are You,	*wa Anta li'l-ḥamdi Ahl*
and You are the One	*wa Anta 'l-*
who is truly Deserving	*Ḥaqīqu*
of gracious recognition	*bi'l-minnati*
and more credit yet.	*thumma 'l-faḍl:*
To You be the praise	*la-ka 'l-ḥamdu*
for the uninterrupted flow	*'alā tatābu'i*
of Your beneficence.	*iḥsāni-k:*
To You be the praise	*wa la-ka 'l-ḥamdu*
for the endless recurrence	*'alā tawāturi*

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[530] This is an allusion to Q. 82:10–12.

[531] This is an allusion to Q. 4:69.

upon him) had this to say on the subject:

“The real meaning *[ḥaqīqa]* of absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]* is the detachment of fear and hope from everything apart from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).”

In the words of another wise saying:

“Absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]* is living one day at a time, and dispensing with concern about tomorrow.”

It was Abū ʿAlī ar-Rūdhbārī (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

“There are three stages in the development of absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*, namely: (1) when he is granted a gift, the recipient is grateful, and when he is deprived, he is patient; (2) as far the servant [of the Lord] is concerned, to be deprived and to be granted a gift are one and the same; (3) deprivation combined with gratitude is what he likes best of all, because he is aware that this is Allāh's preference (Exalted is He) on his behalf.

Jaʿfar al-Khuldī is reported as having said: “Ibrāhīm al-Khawwāṣ (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) once said:

“‘As I was traveling along the road to Mecca, I caught sight of a wild-looking figure, so I said to it: “Are you a jinnī or a human being?” It replied: “I am a jinnī, of course,” so I asked: “Where are you going?” The following conversation then took place between us:

“‘“I am on my way to Mecca,” said the jinnī.

“‘“What,” said I, “with no provision for the journey, and without a camel to ride on?”

“‘“Yes,” said the jinnī, “among our kind as well, there are those who travel on the basis of absolute trust in the Lord *[ʿala 't-tawakkul]*.”

“‘“And what,” I asked, “is absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*?”

“‘“It is receiving from Allāh,” the jinnī told me.’”

Sahl [ibn ʿAbdi'llāh ibn Yūnus at-Tustarī][37] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) once said:

“It is the conscious acknowledgment *[maʿrifa]* of the Provider of the sustenance of all creatures *[Muʿṭī arzāqi 'l-makhlūqīn]*. No one is genuinely capable of absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*, until the sky in his sight is like brass, and the earth is like iron, so that rain does not fall from the sky, and plants do not sprout from the earth, yet between these two, he is well aware that Allāh will never forget to provide him with the sustenance He has guaranteed to him."

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[37] See note 32 on p. 116 above.

In the words of another wise saying:

"It means that you do not disobey Allāh (Exalted is He) on account of your sustenance."

As a certain wise man put it:

"In order to have absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*, it is sufficient that you seek for yourself no helper other than Allāh (Exalted is He), for your sustenance no keeper other than Him, and for your conduct no witness other than Him."

It was al-Junaid[38] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Absolute trust *[tawakkul]* means that you devote yourself totally to your Lord, and that you turn your attention away from all those who are beneath Him."

In the words of an-Nūrī[39] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him):

"It means that you let your self-management become absorbed into His management *[tadbīr]*, and that you are perfectly satisfied with Allāh as a Trustee *[Wakīl]*, as a Manager *[Mudabbir]* and as a Helper *[Naṣīr]*."[40]

Allāh Himself (Exalted is He) has told us:

> And Allāh is sufficient as a Trustee. (4:81) — *wa kafā bi'llāhi Wakīlā.*

In the words of another wise saying:

"Absolute trust *[tawakkul]* is the state in which the humble servant *[al-'abd adh-dhalīl]* is utterly content with the All-Majestic Lord *[ar-Rabb al-Jalīl]*, just as the Bosom Friend *[al-Khalīl]* was utterly content with the

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[38] Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Junaid ibn Muḥammad al-Khazzāz al-Qawārīrī an-Nihāwandī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the son of a glass-merchant. He was a nephew of Sarī as-Saqaṭī, and became a close associate of al-Muḥāsibī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them). Renowned for the clarity of his perception and the firmness of his self-control, he earned a reputation as the principal exponent of the "sober" school of Islāmic mysticism. His *Rasā'il* [Epistles] consist of letters to private individuals, and short tractates on mystical themes, some cast in the form of commentaries on Qur'ānic texts. He died in A.H. 298/910 C.E.

[39] Abu 'l-Ḥusain Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad an-Nūrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a native of Baghdād, although his family came from Khurāsān. He was a pupil of Sarī as-Saqaṭī and a faithful companion of al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them). A leading figure in the Baghdād circle, he composed some fine mystical poetry. He died in A.H. 295/908 C.E.

[40] This is an allusion to the verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān:

> And Allāh is sufficient as a Helper. (4:45) — *wa kafā bi'llāhi Naṣīrā.*

All-Majestic *[al-Jalīl]*, so much so that he took no notice of the attentive presence of Gabriel *[Jibrīl]* (peace be upon him)."

To quote yet another wise saying:

"It means abstaining from self-motivated activity, in complete reliance on the Creator *[Khāliq]* of the earth and the heavens."

Bahlūl the Crazy One *[al-Majnūn]*[41] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) was once asked: "When does the servant [of the Lord] become someone who is absolutely trustful *[mutawakkil]*?" To this he replied: "When he, as a person *[bi'n-nafs]*, is a stranger among his fellow creatures, and when, in his inner feeling *[bi'l-qalb]*, he is close to the Truth *[al-Ḥaqq]*."

Someone asked Ḥātim al-Asamm ["the Deaf"][42] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "On what basis have you developed this special condition of yours, this absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*?" To this he replied: "On four particular elements, namely: (1) I came to realize that my sustenance will not be consumed by anyone other than myself, so I should not be concerned about it; (2) I came to realize that my work will not be done by anyone other than myself, so I must be busy about it; (3) I came to realize that death may come suddenly and unexpectedly, so I must waste no time in order to forestall it; (4) I came to realize that I am in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He) in every condition and circumstance, so I must behave with due modesty under His gaze."

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[41] Bahlūl al-Majnūn [literally, the Crazy One, but more appropriately "the Wise Fool"] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is believed by some to have been the brother of Hārūn ar-Rashīd, the 'Abbāsid Caliph who figures so prominently in the stories of The Thousand and One Nights *[Alf laila wa laila]*. In the words of Sheikh Muzaffer Ozak al-Jerrahi:

> The saint known as Bahlūl the Wise Fool was a conscious spiritual guide. . . . This noble person used to disguise his store of wisdom behind a pretense of craziness, just as clever people hide their buried treasure among ruins. . . . He came and went undisturbed in the palace of Hārūn [ar-Rashīd], who would ask him all kinds of questions, seeking his guidance on affairs of state, while he protected the Caliph's afterlife. (*Irshād*, pp. 324–25.)

[42] Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān Ḥātim ibn 'Unwān al-Asamm ["the Deaf"] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a native of Balkh, and a pupil of Shaqīq al-Balkhī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). He visited Baghdād, and died at Washjird near Tirmidh in A.H. 237/852 C.E. His hearing was actually quite unimpaired, but a woman once broke wind while she was asking him a question, so, to spare her embarrassment, he said to her: "Speak louder. I am hard of hearing." Ḥātim then continued to feign deafness for almost fifteen years, as long as the old woman was still alive. (See: A.J. Arberry, *Muslim Saints and Mystics*. London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966; pp. 150–52.)

Abū Mūsā ad-Dabīlī (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"I asked ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Yahyā about absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*, so he told me: '[It means that] even if you were to stick your hand into the mouth of the great sea monster *[tinnīn]*,[43] as far as the wrist, you would fear nothing other than Allāh.'"

Abū Mūsā (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) went on to say:

"I then set out to visit Abū Yazīd al-Bistāmī[44] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him), in order to ask him about absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*. When I knocked on his door, he said to me: 'O Abū Mūsā, what did you find unsatisfactory in the answer you received from ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, that you should come and ask me the same question?' So I said: 'O my master, open the door!' But he said: 'If you were coming to see me as a regular visitor, I would open the door for you. Take your answer from the door!' So I turned away and left [with the answer, which was: 'Absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]* means that] even if the serpent that is coiled around the Heavenly Throne *[ʿArsh]* were to take an interest in you, you would fear nothing other than Allāh.'"

Abū Mūsā (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) then continued:

"So I kept traveling until I came to [the city of] Dabīl,[45] where I took

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[43] According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the word *tinnīn* is generally understood to mean: "an aquatic animal, great in make, terrible in appearance, long and broad in the body, large in the head, having very glistening eyes, wide mouth and inside, and many teeth. It swallows many animals, and the animals of the land and of the sea are afraid of it. When it moves the sea becomes agitated with waves by reason of its great strength. In its first state, it is a malignant serpent, that eats what it sees of the beasts of the land. When its mischief becomes great, Allāh sends an angel that carries it away, and throws it to Gog *[Yājūj]* and Magog *[Mājūj]*.

"It is related of one that was seen to fall, that it was found to be about two leagues in length, of a color like that of the leopard, with scales like those of a fish, two great fins in form like those of a fish, a head like a great hill, resembling the head of a man, two long and great ears, and two round eyes. From its neck dangled forth six other necks, every one of them nearly twenty cubits long, and every one of them having a head like that of a serpent."

In the context of astronomy, the term *tinnīn* is applied to the northern constellation of the Dragon. (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *T–N–N*.)

[44] Abū Yazīd Ṭaifūr ibn ʿĪsā ibn Sorushān al-Bisṭāmī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), whose grandfather Sorushān was a Zoroastrian, was born in the district of Bisṭām in northeastern Persia, and it was there that he died in A.H. 261 or 264/874 or 877 C.E. His mausoleum still stands as a place of pious visitation. He is famous for the boldness of his utterances, and is regarded as the founder of the ecstatic or "drunken" school of Islāmic mysticism, as opposed to the "sober" school founded by al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

[45] Dabīl is the Arabic name for the Armenian city of Dwin. In a work completed in A.H. 375/985 C.E., the geographer al-Maqdisī reports the existence of an active Ṣūfī community in that city. (See: J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*. Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 6.)

Abū Mūsā ad-Dabīlī (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

"I asked ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Yaḥyā about absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*, so he told me: '[It means that] even if you were to stick your hand into the mouth of the great sea monster *[tinnīn]*,[43] as far as the wrist, you would fear nothing other than Allāh.'"

Abū Mūsā (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) went on to say:

"I then set out to visit Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī[44] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him), in order to ask him about absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*. When I knocked on his door, he said to me: 'O Abū Mūsā, what did you find unsatisfactory in the answer you received from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān, that you should come and ask me the same question?' So I said: 'O my master, open the door!' But he said: 'If you were coming to see me as a regular visitor, I would open the door for you. Take your answer from the door!' So I turned away and left [with the answer, which was: 'Absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]* means that] even if the serpent that is coiled around the Heavenly Throne *[ʿArsh]* were to take an interest in you, you would fear nothing other than Allāh.'"

Abū Mūsā (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) then continued:

"So I kept traveling until I came to [the city of] Dabīl,[45] where I took amputate my hand, which he then tied to my neck. "Now go back down the mountain," he told me, "and return the riding camel, along with the load it carries, to the Arab nomad.'"

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[43] According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the word *tinnīn* is generally understood to mean: "an aquatic animal, great in make, terrible in appearance, long and broad in the body, large in the head, having very glistening eyes, wide mouth and inside, and many teeth. It swallows many animals, and the animals of the land and of the sea are afraid of it. When it moves the sea becomes agitated with waves by reason of its great strength. In its first state, it is a malignant serpent, that eats what it sees of the beasts of the land. When its mischief becomes great, Allāh sends an angel that carries it away, and throws it to Gog *[Yājūj]* and Magog *[Mājūj]*.

"It is related of one that was seen to fall, that it was found to be about two leagues in length, of a color like that of the leopard, with scales like those of a fish, two great fins in form like those of a fish, a head like a great hill, resembling the head of a man, two long and great ears, and two round eyes. From its neck dangled forth six other necks, every one of them nearly twenty cubits long, and every one of them having a head like that of a serpent."

In the context of astronomy, the term *tinnīn* is applied to the northern constellation of the Dragon. (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *T–N–N*.)

[44] Abū Yazīd Ṭaifūr ibn ʿĪsā ibn Sorushān al-Bisṭāmī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), whose grandfather Sorushān was a Zoroastrian, was born in the district of Bisṭām in northeastern Persia, and it was there that he died in A.H. 261 or 264/874 or 877 C.E. His mausoleum still stands as a place of pious visitation. He is famous for the boldness of his utterances, and is regarded as the founder of the ecstatic or "drunken" school of Islāmic mysticism, as opposed to the "sober" school founded by al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

[45] Dabīl is the Arabic name for the Armenian city of Dwin. In a work completed in A.H. 375/985 C.E., the geographer al-Maqdisī reports the existence of an active Ṣūfī community in that city. (See: J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*. Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 6.)

[The Caliph] ʻUmar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> "'If you really and truly placed all your trust in Allāh *[law tawakkaltum ʻala 'llāhi haqqa tawakkuli-hi]*, He would sustain you as He sustains the birds. They start the day with their bellies empty, and end it with their bellies full.'"

According to a traditional report, transmitted by Muhammad ibn Kaʻb on the authority of Ibn ʻAbbās[47] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

> If it would please someone to be the noblest of men, let him devote himself truly to Allāh. And if it would please someone to be the richest of men, let him be more reliant on what is at the disposal of Allāh, and less reliant on what is at his own disposal.

ʻUmar [ibn al-Khattāb] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to quote these two verses [of Arabic poetry] as an instructive example:

Go easy on yourself,	*hawwin ʻalai-ka*
for the outcome of all affairs	*fa-inna 'l-umūra*
is determined by God's decree.	*bi-amri 'l-lāhi maqādīru-hā.*
If something is meant to go elsewhere,	*fa-laisa bi-āti-ka*
it will never come your way,	*maṣrūfu-hā*
but if it is yours by destiny,	*wa lā hāribin*
from you it cannot flee.	*ʻan-ka maqdūru-hā.*

Someone asked Yahyā ibn Muʻādh [ar-Rāzī][48] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "When does a man become someone who is absolutely trustful *[mutawakkil]*?" To this he replied: "When he is perfectly satisfied with Allāh as a Trustee *[Wakīl]*."[49]

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[47] ʻAbdu'llāh ibn ʻAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was a cousin of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He became a scholar of great renown, especially for exegesis *[tafsīr]* of the Qur'ān. He died in A.H. 68.

[48] Abū Zakariyā' Yahyā ibn Muʻādh ar-Rāzī (may Allāh bestow his mercy upon him) was a disciple of Ibn Karrām. After leaving his native town of Rayy, he lived for a time in Balkh, then moved to Nishapur where he died in A.H. 258/871 C.E. He is credited with the authorship of a certain number of poems.

[49] This is an allusion to the verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān:

And Allāh is sufficient as a Trustee. (4:81) *wa kafā bi'llāhi Wakīlā.*

troublesome to be kept waiting. If he wishes to provide a fellow pauper *[faqīr]* with a meal, he must not keep him in a state of expectation, because waiting for the broth is a form of humiliation.

- He should not keep anything stored away, when he could make it available.
- If the meal does not amount to very much, he should only eat the leftovers, after the others have finished.
- When he provides a meal for his fellow paupers *[fuqarā']*, he must try very hard to present it as neatly and tastefully as he possibly can.
- If he is dining in company, he should not act differently from the others, by eating one thing and not partaking of another. If he has the opportunity to share something, he should set it in the middle of the table.
- If he falls sick, while he is in company, so that he needs something special to treat his condition, it is proper for him to seek permission from the others present, before taking his medicine.
- As for the situation where he is staying at a guesthouse *[ribāṭ]* or a school *[madrasa]*, in which a Shaikh is present, or an attendant is on duty, he is obliged to accept the authority *[hukm]* of that Shaikh, and he must not do anything without consulting him first.
- If he arrives to join a group, he must harmonize with its members in whatever activity they happen to be engaged in.
- He should not raise his voice among his fellow paupers *[fuqarā']*, when pronouncing his glorification of Allāh *[tasbīḥ]* and performing his Qur'ānic recitation. He should rather conceal that from them and keep it under his breath, or else convert it into meditation *[tafakkur]* and the practice of inner worship *['ibāda bāṭina]*.

This does not apply, however, if he is one of the special élite *[khawāṣṣ]*, those who are privy to the mysteries *[dhawi 'l-asrār]*. There is then no need for him to stand on ceremony, because his Lord will control him, prepare him, and tell him what to do and what not to do, in keeping with the situation. His Lord will put the hearts of the community *[jamā'a]* at his disposal, incline them toward him, and fill them, sometimes with love for him, and sometimes with awe and respect.

- It is likewise inappropriate for him to raise his voice for any other reason, when speaking in their midst.

He also said: "It means the cessation of ambitious designs *[maṭāmi‘]*."

As for the enterprising activity that is undertaken with the outer being *[al-ḥaraka bi'ẓ-ẓāhir]*—which is a way of describing material acquisition *[kasb]* conducted in accordance with the Sunna[52]—this is not incompatible with the absolute trust experienced by the inner feeling *[tawakkul al-qalb]*, after the servant [of the Lord] has come to realize, within his inner feeling, that the power to decide is the prerogative of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). [There is no incompatibility between the two] because the location of absolute trust *[tawakkul]* is the inner feeling, and because it constitutes the actualization of faith *[taḥqīq al-īmān]*. To reject the validity of material acquisition *[kasb]* would be tantamount to rejecting the validity of the Sunna, and to reject the validity of absolute trust *[tawakkul]* would be tantamount to rejecting the validity of faith *[īmān]*.

If some difficulty is encountered in relation to the material means *[asbāb]*, it is due to the decree of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and if something is found to be easy in that regard, it is due to His facilitation (Almighty and Glorious is He). The limbs and organs of the physical body, and all the external faculties *[ẓawāhir]*, must therefore be actively involved in the instrumental process *[mutaḥarrika bi's-sabab]*, in compliance with the commandment of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), while the inner being *[bāṭin]* remains calmly reliant on the promise of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).[53]

Anas ibn Mālik [54] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

"A man once rode into town on a fine she-camel of his, and he said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, shall I just leave her unattended, and put my trust in the Lord *[ada‘u-hā wa atawakkalu]*?' So the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told him: 'Hobble her feet with a rope, and put your trust in the Lord *[a‘qil-hā wa tawakkal]*!'"

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[52] In other words, this statement refers to material acquisition *[kasb]* conducted in accordance with the customary procedures established by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[53] See note 31 on p. 115 above.

[54] Abū Ḥamza Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is one of the most prolific narrators of Prophetic tradition. His mother presented him as a servant to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in whose service he remained until his master died. Anas himself lived on to a very advanced age (according to various accounts, he was somewhere between 97 and 107 years old when he died, around A.H. 91–93).

In the words of one wise saying:

"He who puts all his trust in the Lord is like a baby. Just as the infant is not aware of having anything else to turn to, except its mother's breast, the completely trustful person [*al-mutawakkil*] feels himself guided in no other direction, except toward his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He)."

In the words of another wise saying:

"Absolute trust in the Lord [*tawakkul*] means the banishment of doubts, and the delegation [*tafwīḍ*] of one's concerns to the King of kings [*Mālik al-mulūk*]."

In the words of yet another wise saying:

"Absolute trust in the Lord [*tawakkul*] means relying with confidence on what is at the disposal of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and expecting nothing at all from what is at the disposal of human beings."

This saying also deserves to be quoted:

"Absolute trust in the Lord [*tawakkul*] means emptying the innermost being [*sirr*] of any consideration one might give to the idea of resorting to litigation [*taqāḍī*] in the quest for sustenance."

2.
Concerning goodness of moral character *[ḥusn al-khulq]*.

As for goodness of moral character *[ḥusn al-khulq]*, the basic guidance on the subject is contained in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), addressed to His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in His Book, which was sent down and revealed to him:

And you are indeed of a splendid character. (68:4)	*wa inna-ka* *la-ʿalā khuluqin ʿaẓīm.*[55]

There is also the traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik[56] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who said:

"Someone asked: 'O Messenger of Allāh, which of the believers *[muʾminīn]* is the most excellent in faith *[īmān]*?' To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> "'The best of them in moral character *[aḥsanu-hum khuluqan]*.'"

Good moral character *[al-khuluq al-ḥasan]* is the most excellent of all the virtues of the servant [of the Lord], and through it the essential natures *[jawāhir]* of men are made manifest. The human being is privately disguised by his physical constitution *[khalq]*, and publicly revealed by his moral character *[khulq]*.

To quote a wise saying on the subject:

"Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has distinguished His Prophet and His Messenger, Muḥammad, (Allāh bless him and give him peace), by endowing him with certain miracles *[muʿjizāt]*, charismatic exploits *[karāmāt]*,[57] and exceptional virtues *[faḍāʾil]*. Yet He has not praised him for any of his special qualities, to the same extent as He has praised these two, he is well aware that Allāh will never forget to provide him with the sustenance He has guaranteed to him."

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[55] The forms *[khuluq]* and *[khulq]* are completely synonymous, both meaning "[moral] character, temper, nature, innate peculiarity, natural disposition." While the form *khuluq* occurs in this verse *[āya]* of the Qurʾān, the shorter form *khulq* is probably more commonly used.

[56] See note 54 on p. 124 above.

In the words of another wise saying:

"It means that you do not disobey Allāh (Exalted is He) on account of your sustenance."

As a certain wise man put it:

"In order to have absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*, it is sufficient that you seek for yourself no helper other than Allāh (Exalted is He), for your sustenance no keeper other than Him, and for your conduct no witness other than Him."

It was al-Junaid[38] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Absolute trust *[tawakkul]* means that you devote yourself totally to your Lord, and that you turn your attention away from all those who are beneath Him."

In the words of an-Nūrī[39] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him):

"It means that you let your self-management become absorbed into His management *[tadbīr]*, and that you are perfectly satisfied with Allāh as a Trustee *[Wakīl]*, as a Manager *[Mudabbir]* and as a Helper *[Naṣīr]*."[40]

Allāh Himself (Exalted is He) has told us:

> And Allāh is sufficient as a Trustee. (4:81) *wa kafā bi'llāhi Wakīlā.*

In the words of another wise saying:

"Absolute trust *[tawakkul]* is the state in which the humble servant *[al-'abd adh-dhalīl]* is utterly content with the All-Majestic Lord *[ar-Rabb al-Jalīl]*, just as the Bosom Friend *[al-Khalīl]* was utterly content with the

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[38] Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Junaid ibn Muhammad al-Khazzāz al-Qawārīrī an-Nihāwandī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the son of a glass-merchant. He was a nephew of Sarī as-Saqaṭī, and became a close associate of al-Muḥāsibī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them). Renowned for the clarity of his perception and the firmness of his self-control, he earned a reputation as the principal exponent of the "sober" school of Islāmic mysticism. His *Rasā'il* [Epistles] consist of letters to private individuals, and short tractates on mystical themes, some cast in the form of commentaries on Qur'ānic texts. He died in A.H. 298/910 C.E.

[39] Abu 'l-Ḥusain Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad an-Nūrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a native of Baghdād, although his family came from Khurāsān. He was a pupil of Sarī as-Saqaṭī and a faithful companion of al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them). A leading figure in the Baghdād circle, he composed some fine mystical poetry. He died in A.H. 295/908 C.E.

[40] This is an allusion to the verse *[āya]* of the Qur'ān:

> And Allāh is sufficient as a Helper. (4:45) *wa kafā bi'llāhi Naṣīrā.*

It was al-Junaid [59] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said: "I once heard al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī[60] say:

"'We have lost three things: (1) good looks combined with chastity, (2) good speech combined with honesty, and (3) good brotherliness combined with loyalty.'"

In the words of one wise saying:

"Good moral character *[al-khuluq al-ḥasan]* means attaching little importance to that which is withheld from you, and attaching great importance to that which is granted to you."

To quote another wise saying:

"The mark of goodness of moral character *[ḥusn al-khuluq]* is the prevention of serious harm and the toleration of nuisances."

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to his Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them all):

> You will never succeed in comforting people with your worldly possessions, so comfort them with cheerfulness of face and goodness of moral character *[ḥusn al-khuluq]*.

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[59] See note 38 on p. 118 above.

[60] Abū ʿAbdi'llāh al-Ḥārith ibn Asad al-Baṣrī al-Muḥāsibī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is generally regarded as one of the most outstanding figures in the history of Islāmic mysticism. Born in Basra in A.H. 165/781 C.E., he was still at an early age when he moved to Baghdād, where he studied the traditions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), became an expert in Islāmic theology *[kalām]*, and was closely involved with the leading personalities and prominent events of his times. He died in A.H. 243/857 C.E., but his teachings and writings continued to exert a profound and far-reaching influence, notably on the famous Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (the author of *Iḥyā' ʿUlūm ad-Dīn*). Many of al-Muḥāsibī's books and pamphlets have been preserved to this day.

Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth

[Al Ghunya li-Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq]

A COMPLETE RESOURCE ON THE INNER AND OUTER ASPECTS OF ISLAM

VOLUME FIVE

SHAIKH ʿABD AL-QĀDIR AL-JĪLĀNĪ

TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC BY MUHTAR HOLLAND

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—"The favor conferred outwardly is the orderly arrangement of the physical constitution *[khalq]*, while the favor conferred inwardly is the purification of the moral character *[khulq]*."

Someone asked Ibrāhīm ibn Ad'ham[64] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "Have you ever felt really happy in this world?" "Yes," he replied, "on two occasions. On the first occasion, as I was sitting at ease one day, a dog came along and urinated on me. On the second occasion, again while I was sitting at ease, a person came along and slapped me on the back of the neck."

It is said of Uwais al-Qaranī[65] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) that, whenever he caught sight of young boys throwing stones at him, he would say to them: "If you have nothing better to do, at least choose only little stones to throw at me, so that you will not make my leg bleed, and prevent me from performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*!"

It is said that a man kept heaping insults on Aḥnaf ibn Qais (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him), tagging along behind him as he did so. Finally, when he reached the outskirts of the village, Aḥnaf stopped in his tracks. "Young man," he said, "if you have anything else to get off your chest, you had better say it now, in case some of the local village idiots happen to hear you, and respond to you in kind!"

Someone asked Ḥātim al-Aṣamm ["the Deaf"]:[66] "Should a man maintain an attitude of tolerance toward every individual?" "Yes," he replied, "except toward himself."

According to a traditional report, the Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Mu'minīn]*, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), once summoned a bondsman *[ghulām]*, but the young attendant failed to respond to his call. So he summoned him a second time, and a third, but still he did not respond. He then went to look for him, and

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[64] Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm ibn Ad'ham ibn Manṣūr ibn Yazīd ibn Jābir at-Tamīmī al-'Ijlī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was born in Balkh of pure Arab descent. His life has often been compared to that of Buddha, since he is described in legend as the Prince of Balkh who renounced his kingdom and wandered westward to live a life of complete asceticism, earning his bread in Syria by honest manual labor until his death in ca. A.H. 165/782 C.E. According to some accounts, he was killed in the course of a naval expedition against Byzantium.

[65] See note 10 on p. 31 above.

[66] See note 42 on p. 119 above.

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[65] See note 10 on p. 31 above.

[66] See note 42 on p. 119 above.

3.

Concerning thankfulness *[shukr]*.

As for thankfulness *[shukr]*, the basic guidance on the subject is contained in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

If you are thankful,	*la-in shakartum*
I will surely give you more;	*la-azīdanna-kum*
but if you are ungrateful,	*wa la-in kafartum*
My punishment is terrible indeed.	*inna ʿadhābī la-shadīd.*
(14:7)	

This is reinforced by the traditional report, transmitted on the authority of ʿAṭāʾ (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him), who said:

"I entered the presence of [the Prophet's widow] ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), and said: 'Tell us about the most amazing experience you ever had in the company of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).' She wept at first, but then she said: 'Was there anything at all about him that was not a marvelous wonder? He came to me one night, and snuggled up beside me in my bed *[firāshī]*[69] until his skin was touching my skin. But then he said: 'O daughter of Abū Bakr, let me go, so that I may devote myself to the worship of my Lord.'

"She said: 'So I told him: "I love your nearness, but I prefer to respect your dearest wish." I therefore allowed him (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to take his leave of me. So he got up, found a skin container full of water, and performed his ritual ablution *[tawaḍḍaʾa]*, pouring a considerable amount of water in the process. Then he stood erect, and started to perform the ritual prayer *[qāma fa-ṣallā]*. He wept as he did so, until his tears were streaming down onto his chest. Then he adopted the bowing posture *[rakaʿa]*, and shed more tears. Then he prostrated himself *[sajada]*, and again he wept. Then he raised his head, and wept still more. He went on like this (Allāh bless him and give him peace) until Bilāl[70] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) arrived on the scene, and so he told him about the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*.

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[69] At this point in the text, the reporter interjects: "or she may have said '*liḥāfī* [my bedspread].'"

"'I then said: "O Messenger of Allāh, what causes you to weep, when Allāh has forgiven you your earlier and later sins?" To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> ""'Should I not be a thankful servant *['abd shakūr]*? Why should I not do it, since Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has sent down to me the words of revelation:

Surely in the creation of the heavens	*inna fī khalqi 's-samāwāti*
and the earth, and the alternation	*wa 'l-arḍi wa 'khtilāfi 'l-laili*
of night and day,	*wa 'n-nahāri*
and the ship that runs upon the sea	*wa 'l-fulki 'llatī tajrī*
with that which is of use	*fi 'l-baḥri bi-mā yanfa'u 'n-nāsa*
to human beings, and the water	*wa mā anzala 'llāhu*
which Allāh sends down	*mina 's-samā'i min mā'in*
from the sky, thereby reviving	*fa-aḥyā bi-hi 'l-arḍa*
the earth after its death,	*ba'da mawti-hā wa baththa*
and dispersing all kinds	*fī-hā min*
of beasts therein,	*kulli dābba:*
and the distribution of the winds,	*wa taṣrīfi 'r-riyāḥi*
and the clouds set in orderly array	*wa 's-saḥābi 'l-musakhkhari*
between heaven and earth—	*baina 's-samā'i wa 'l-arḍi*
surely there are signs for people	*la-āyātin li-qawmin*
who can understand. (2:164) "'"	*ya'qilūn.*

According to those who specialize in ascertaining the actual facts *[ahl at-taḥqīq]*, the true nature of thankfulness *[ḥaqīqat ash-shukr]* is the acknowledgment of the benefaction of the benefactor *[ni'mat al-mun'im]*, with an attitude of humility. In accordance with this meaning, Allāh (Exalted is He) has described Himself as being the Most Thankful One *[ash-Shakūr]* in the widest sense, that is to say, in the sense that He rewards His servants for their thankfulness. For the recompense of thankfulness *[jazā' ash-shukr]* is also called thankfulness *[shukr]*, just as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

And the recompense of an evil	*wa jazā'u sayyi'atin*
is an evil just like it. (42:40)	*sayyi'atun mithlu-hā.*

It has also been said that the true nature of thankfulness *[ḥaqīqat ash-shukr]* is the act of praising the beneficent person *[muḥsin]* by mentioning his beneficence *[iḥsān]*. The servant's thankfulness *[shukr]* to Allāh (Exalted is He) is therefore expressed through the praise he offers to Him, by mentioning His beneficence *[iḥsān]* toward His servant. As for the thankfulness *[shukr]* of the Lord of Truth (Glory be to Him) toward His servant, it is expressed through the praise He confers upon him, by making it known that he has acted beneficently for His sake. Furthermore, the beneficence *[iḥsān]* of the servant represents his worshipful obedience to Allāh, while the beneficence *[iḥsān]* of the Lord of Truth (Glory be to Him) represents His bestowal of gracious favor *[inʿām]* upon His servant. When the thankfulness *[shukr]* of the servant is genuine, it is not only a matter of utterance by the tongue, but also the heart's acknowledgment of the Lord's bestowal of gracious favor *[inʿām ar-Rabb]*.

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[70] Bilāl al-Ḥabashī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was the first muezzin *[mu'adhdhin]* appointed by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to summon the Muslim community to the five daily prayers. He was an Abyssinian slave who had been ransomed by Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

Moreover, thankfulness *[shukr]* can be subdivided into several categories, namely:

1. Thankfulness expressed by the tongue *[shukr bi'l-lisān]*. This constitutes the acknowledgment of the benefaction *[niʿma]* with an attitude of humble acceptance *[istikāna]*.
2. Thankfulness expressed by the body and the limbs *[shukr bi'l-badan wa 'l-arkān]*. This is the characteristic indication of loyalty and readiness to serve *[al-wafā' wa 'l-khidma]*.
3. Thankfulness expressed by the inner feeling *[shukr bi'l-qalb]*. This requires a careful balance between the visible display of appreciation and the constant preservation of a sense of reverence.

It has also been said that thankfulness of the eyes *[shukr al-ʿainain]* means that you overlook any fault you notice in your companion, while thankfulness of the ears *[shukr al-udhunain]* means that you ignore any fault you hear him accused of possessing.

In the simplest terms, thankfulness *[shukr]* means that you do not disobey Allāh (Exalted is He) by misusing His gracious favors.

Here is another saying that clearly deserves to be quoted:

"Thankfulness *[shukr]* may mean the thankfulness of the learned scholars *[shukr al-ʿālimīn]*, in which case it will be among the subjects they discuss.

"Thankfulness *[shukr]* may mean the thankfulness of the dedicated worshippers *[shukr al-ʿābidīn]*, in which case it will be a feature of their actions.

"Thankfulness *[shukr]* may mean the thankfulness of those who know by direct intuition *[shukr al-'ārifīn]*, in which case it will be expressed through their honest devotion to Him (Almighty and Glorious is He) in all their states and conditions. It will be expressed through their firm conviction that whatever is good in their experience, and whatever is manifested from them in the way of worshipful obedience, servitude, and remembrance of Him (Almighty and Glorious is He), is entirely due to His enabling guidance *[tawfīq]*, His gracious favor, His help, His power and His strength (Almighty and Glorious is He). It will be expressed through their detachment from all of that, and their total absorption *[fanā']* in Him. It will be expressed through their acknowledgment of their own inability, deficiency and ignorance, and then through their humble submission to Him (Almighty and Glorious is He) in all conditions and circumstances."

It was Abū Bakr al-Warrāq (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Thankfulness for a gracious favor *[shukr an-ni'ma]* means feasting one's eyes on the gift received, while preserving a sense of reverence."

As someone else once put it:

"Thankfulness for a gracious favor *[shukr an-ni'ma]* means that you regard yourself as no more deserving of it than a parasite *[tufailī]*."

It was Abū 'Uthmān [al-Ḥīrī][71] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Thankfulness *[shukr]* is the conscious awareness *[ma'rifa]* of the fact that you are quite incapable of thankfulness."

Let us also consider the following wise sayings:

"Thankfulness for thankfulness *[ash-shukr 'ala 'sh-shukr]* is more complete than simple thankfulness *[shukr]*. This means that you regard your thankfulness as the result of His enablement *[tawfīq]*, and you have received that enablement on account of the gracious favors bestowed upon you, so you give thanks to Him for the thankfulness He has enabled you to experience. Then you thank Him for the thankfulness-upon-thankfulness *[shukr ash-shukr]*, and so on ad infinitum."

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[71] Abū 'Uthmān Sa'īd ibn Ismā'īl al-Ḥīrī [or al-Ḥairī], known as al-Wā'iẓ [the Preacher] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), was one of the early Shaikhs of Khurāsān. Along with Ḥamdūn al-Qaṣṣār an-Nīsābūrī and Abū Ḥafṣ 'Amr ibn Salma al-Ḥaddād an-Nīsābūrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them), he came to be regarded as one of the three founding fathers of the Malāmatī movement. He visited al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) in Baghdād, and died at Nishapur in A.H. 298/911 C.E. "Even in the days of my childhood," he once said, "my heart was always seeking after something of reality. I was always convinced…that the Islāmic way of life held mysteries other than its external manifestations."

"Thankfulness *[shukr]* is the attribution of blessings to their Master *[Maulā]*, with an attitude of humble submission to Him."

It was al-Junaid[72] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Thankfulness *[shukr]* means that you do not look upon yourself as worthy of the gracious favor you have received."

In several wise sayings, the meaning of the simple adjective *shākir* [thankful; grateful] is contrasted with the significance of the intensive form *shakūr* [very thankful; most grateful; extremely appreciative]. For instance:

"The person who is simply thankful *[shākir]* is someone who gives thanks for what is available *[maujūd]*, while the person who is very thankful *[shakūr]* is someone who gives thanks for what is unavailable *[mafqūd]*."

"The person who is simply thankful *[shākir]* is someone who gives thanks for the provision of benefit *[naf']*, while the person who is very thankful *[shakūr]* is someone who gives thanks for the withholding of benefit *[man']*."

"The person who is simply thankful *[shākir]* is someone who gives thanks for the granting of gifts *['atā']*, while the person who is very thankful *[shakūr]* is someone who gives thanks for trial and tribulation *[balā']*."

"The person who is simply thankful *[shākir]* is someone who gives thanks in response to immediate delivery *[badhl]*, while the person who is very thankful *[shakūr]* is someone who gives thanks when delivery is subject to deferment *[matl]*."

It was [Abū Bakr ibn Jahdar] ash-Shiblī[73] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Thankfulness *[shukr]* means focusing attention on the source of the benefit *[mun'im]*, not focusing attention on the benefit *[ni'ma]* itself."

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[72] See note 38 on p. 118 above.

[73] Abū Bakr ibn Jahdar ash-Shiblī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was of Khurāsānian origin, although born in Baghdād or Sāmarrā. The son of a court official, he rose through the ranks of the imperial service. While in Baghdād for the occasion of his investiture as Governor of Demavend, he experienced conversion. He joined the circle of al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), played a leading part in the stormy history of al-Hallāj (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), and was committed to an asylum on account of his eccentric behavior. He died in A.H. 334/946 C.E. at the age of 87. (See: A.J. Arberry, *Muslim Saints and Mystics*. London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966; pp. 277-86.)

Someone else had this to say on the subject:

"Thankfulness *[shukr]* means firmly securing the bonds of that which has been found *[qaid al-maujūd]*, and then hunting for that which is still missing *[ṣaid al-mafqūd]*."

It was Abū ʿUthmān [al-Ḥīrī][74] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"The thankfulness of the common folk *[shukr al-ʿāmma]* is for food and drink and clothing, while the thankfulness of the élite *[shukr al-khawāṣṣ]* is for the spiritual values *[maʿānī]* conferred upon their hearts."

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

And few of My servants are very thankful. (34:13)	*wa qalīlun min* *ʿibādiya 'sh-shakūr.*

[The Prophet] David (peace be upon him) once said:

"My God *[Ilāhī]*, how can I thank You, when my thankfulness to You *[shukrī la-ka]* is itself a blessing from among Your gracious favors *[niʿma min niʿami-ka]*?"

So Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) conveyed to him by way of inspiration *[auḥā ilai-h]*: "Now you have thanked Me indeed! *[al-āna qad shakarta-nī]*."

To quote another wise saying:

"If your hand is too short to extend remuneration, let your tongue dwell at length on the expression of thanks *[shukr]*."

When Idrīs (peace be upon him) was given the good tiding of forgiveness, he is said to have asked for life. "Why?" he was asked, so he explained: "So that I may be able to thank Him, for I was previously working for forgiveness." The angel thereupon spread its wing, and carried him up to heaven.

It is said that one of the Prophets *[Anbiyāʾ]* (peace be upon them all) once passed by a small stone, from which a large amount of water was gushing forth. He was astonished at the sight, but Allāh caused the stone to let him know that it could speak, so he asked it about its condition. It told him: "Ever since I heard Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) speak of:

a Fire of which the fuel is men and stones. (66:6)	*nāran waqūdu-ha 'n-nāsu* *wa 'l-ḥijāratu.*

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[74] See note 73 on p. 135 above.

—I have been weeping from fear of it." So that Prophet (peace be upon him) offered a prayer of supplication, pleading with Him to grant that stone asylum from the Fire. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) thereupon conveyed to him by way of inspiration *[awḥā ilai-h]*: "I have already granted it asylum from the Fire." That Prophet then continued on his way. When he returned later on, he found that the water was still gushing from the stone, but even more copiously than on his previous visit. He was bewildered, but Allāh (Exalted is He) again caused the stone to let him know that it could speak, so he said to it: "Why are you still weeping, when Allāh has already forgiven you?" The stone explained: "That was the weeping of sorrow and fear, but this is the weeping of thankfulness *[shukr]* and joy."

In the words of another wise saying:

"One who is thankful *[shākir]* is in the presence of superabundance *[mazīd]*, because he is going through the experience of receiving gracious favor *[niʿma]*, for Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

If you are thankful,	*la-in shakartum*
I will surely give you more. (14:7)	*la-azīdanna-kum*

"And one who is patient *[ṣābir]* is in the presence of Allāh, taking shelter with Him (Exalted is He), because he is going through the experience of suffering trial and tribulation *[balāʾ]*. Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

Surely Allāh is with	*inna 'llāha*
those who are patient. (2:153)"	*maʿa 'ṣ-ṣābirīn*

"Praise *[ḥamd]*," it has been said, "is for the very breaths we breathe, while thankfulness *[shukr]* is for the blessings of the senses."

In the words of the authentic tradition *[al-khabar aṣ-ṣaḥīḥ]*:

> The first of those invited to enter the Garden of Paradise will be those who are constantly praising Allāh *[al-ḥammādūna li'llāh]*

"Praise *[ḥamd]*," it has also been said, "is for what He has prevented, while thankfulness *[shukr]* is for what He has brought into being."

The following story was told by one of the righteous:

"In the course of one of my journeys, I caught sight of an old man, who was far advanced in age, so I asked him about his condition. He responded by telling me: 'In the early part of my life, I was deeply in love with a cousin of mine, the daughter of my paternal uncle, and she was equally in love with me, so it was agreed that I should marry her. [When she entered my chamber] on the night of her bridal procession *[zifāf]*, I said to her: 'Come, let us spend the whole of this night in worship, as a way of giving thanks to Allāh *[shukran li'llāh]* (Almighty and Glorious is He) for having brought us together.' So we performed the ritual prayer *[sallainā]* throughout that night, and neither of us paid any attention to the other. Then, when the second night came around, we spent the whole of it in similar fashion. This came to be our constant practice, so that now, after seventy or eighty years have gone by, we are still in that same state every night.' His wife was with him at the time, so he turned to her and asked her: 'Is that not just the way it is, O so-and-so?' To this the old woman replied: 'It is just as the old man told you.'"

4.
Concerning patience *[ṣabr]*.

As for patience *[ṣabr]*, the basic guidance on the subject is contained in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

O you who believe,	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna*
endure with patience,	*āmanu 'ṣbirū*
outdo all others	*wa ṣābirū*
in patient endurance, be ready,	*wa rābiṭū:*
and observe your duty to Allāh,	*wa 'ttaqu 'llāha*
in order that you may succeed.	*la'alla-kum tufliḥūn.*
(3:200)	

—and in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And endure patiently [O Muḥammad].	*wa 'ṣbir*
Your endurance is only	*wa mā ṣabru-ka*
by [the help of] Allāh. (16:127)	*illā bi'llāhi.*

—as well as in the following traditional reports:

According to 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> Patience ought to be exercised at the first shock *[inna aṣ-ṣabra 'inda 'ṣ-ṣadmati'l-ūlā]*.[75]

It is reported that a man once said: "O Messenger of Allāh, my property has gone and my body has become sick." So the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told him:

> There is no good in a servant [of the Lord] whose property does not depart, and whose body does not get sick. Whenever Allāh (Exalted is He) loves a servant of His, He is sure to put him to the test, and when He puts him to the test, He admonishes him to be patient.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is also reported as having said:

> In the progress of a man's development in the sight of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), there is a stage that he cannot reach by means of his own work.

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[75] In commenting on the use of the word *ṣadma* [shock, assault, attack], as it occurs in this saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the classical Arabic lexicographers observe that "patience is usually the last thing to be exercised in a case of misfortune, but it is most commended on the occasion of the sharpness or vehemence thereof." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. Ṣ–D–M.)

Someone else had this to say on the subject:

"Thankfulness *[shukr]* means firmly securing the bonds of that which has been found *[qaid al-mawjūd]*, and then hunting for that which is still missing *[ṣaid al-mafqūd]*."

It was Abū ʿUthmān [al-Ḥīrī][74] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"The thankfulness of the common folk *[shukr al-ʿāmma]* is for food and drink and clothing, while the thankfulness of the élite *[shukr al-khawāṣṣ]* is for the spiritual values *[maʿānī]* conferred upon their hearts."

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

And few of My servants	*wa qalīlun min*
are very thankful. (34:13)	*ʿibādiya 'sh-shakūr.*

[The Prophet] David (peace be upon him) once said:

"My God *[Ilāhī]*, how can I thank You, when my thankfulness to You *[shukrī la-ka]* is itself a blessing from among Your gracious favors *[niʿma min niʿami-ka]*?"

So Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) conveyed to him by way of inspiration *[awḥā ilai-h]*: "Now you have thanked Me indeed! *[al-āna qad shakarta-nī]*."

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When Idrīs (peace be upon him) was given the good tiding of forgiveness, he is said to have asked for life. "Why?" he was asked, so he explained: "So that I may be able to thank Him, for I was previously working for forgiveness." The angel thereupon spread its wing, and carried him up to heaven.

It is said that one of the Prophets *[Anbiyāʾ]* (peace be upon them all) once passed by a small stone, from which a large amount of water was gushing forth. He was astonished at the sight, but Allāh caused the stone to let him know that it could speak, so he asked it about its condition. It told him: "Ever since I heard Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) speak of:

a Fire of which	*nāran waqūdu-ha 'n-nāsu*
the fuel is men and stones. (66:6)	*wa 'l-ḥijāratu.*

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[74] See note 73 on p. 135 above.

> He must first suffer the pain of affliction in his physical body, for that is the only means by which he can reach it.

According to one traditional account [*khabar*], when the words of Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He):

And he who does something wrong	*wa man ya'mal sū'an*
will have the recompense thereof.	*yujza bi-hi.*
(4:123)	

—were sent down, Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth [*aṣ-Ṣiddīq*] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), said: "O Messenger of Allāh, how can there be any hope of salvation [*falāḥ*], now that this Qur'ānic verse [*āya*] has been revealed?" So the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told him:

> Allāh has forgiven you, O Abū Bakr. Do you not get sick? Does painful affliction not befall you? Do you not endure with patience? Do you not experience grief and sorrow? Well, these are the things for which you will be recompensed.

That is to say: "Every affliction that befalls you will be an atonement [*kaffāra*] for your sins."

There are actually three kinds of patience [*ṣabr*], namely:

1. Patience for the sake of Allāh [*ṣabr li'llāh*] (Almighty and Glorious is He). This is the kind of patience [*ṣabr*] that is exercised in the course of carrying out His commandments and respectfully observing His prohibitions.

2. Patience in bearing with Allāh [*ṣabr ma'a 'llāh*] (Almighty and Glorious is He). This is the kind of patience [*ṣabr*] that is exercised while undergoing the effects of His decree and His actions within you, which cause you to experience all kinds of hardships and adversities.

3. Patience in anticipation of Allāh [*ṣabr 'ala 'llāh*] (Almighty and Glorious is He). This is the kind of patience [*ṣabr*] that is exercised while waiting for that which He has promised, in the way of sustenance, joyful relief, sufficiency, triumphant success, and reward in the abode of the Hereafter.

It has also been said that patience [*ṣabr*] can be divided into two types, namely:

1. Patience [*ṣabr*] exercised in situations where there is an active rôle [*kasb*] for the servant [of the Lord] to play.

2. Patience [*ṣabr*] exercised in situations where he has no active rôle [*kasb*] to play.

extremely hard. But patience with Allāh *[aṣ-ṣabr ma'a 'llāh]* is even more difficult."

Someone asked him (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) to explain the meaning of patience *[ṣabr]*, so he said: "It is the swallowing of a bitter draught without displaying a frown or a scowl."

'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: "Patience *[ṣabr]* in relation to faith *[īmān]* is in the position of the head in relation to the body."[78]

It was Dhu 'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī[79] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Patience *[ṣabr]* means refraining from acts of noncompliance, remaining calm when swallowing the lumps that form in the throat as a reaction to misfortune, and demonstrating spiritual affluence despite the advent of poverty in the sphere of material livelihood."

The following sayings also deserve to be quoted:

"Patience *[ṣabr]* means coping with misfortune by remaining on your best behavior."

"It means being wiped out by misfortune *[balwā]* without showing any sign of complaint *[shakwā]*."

"Patience *[ṣabr]* means keeping a healthy attitude in the presence of adversity, no less than in the presence of well-being."

"The most excellent recompense for worshipful service *['ibāda]* is the recompense for patience *[ṣabr]*. Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

And We shall surely pay those	*wa la-najziyanna 'lladhīna*
who were patient their wage,	*ṣabarū ajra-hum*
according to the best	*bi-aḥsani*
of what they did. (16:96)	*mā kānū ya'malūn.*

—and He has also told us (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Surely the patient	*innamā yuwaffa 's-*
will be paid their wages	*ṣābirūna ajra-hum*
in full without reckoning.	*bi-ghairi ḥisāb.*
(39:10)"	

"Patience *[ṣabr]* means remaining steadfast in loyal obedience to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and accepting the agonies of His affliction with a broad and expansive feeling."

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[78] ***Author's note:*** According to some authorities, this saying has been attributed to the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[79] See note 51 on p. 123 above.

It was al-Khawwāṣ[80] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Patience *[ṣabr]* means remaining steadfast in loyal obedience to Allāh (Exalted is He), in accordance with the statutes *[aḥkām]* of the Book and the Sunna."

Yaḥyā ibn Mu'ādh ar-Rāzī[81] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) once said:

"The patience of the lovers [of the Lord] *[ṣabr al-muḥibbīn]* is much harder than the patience of the ascetics *[ṣabr az-zāhidīn]*. How astonishing it is, that they can be patient at all!"

He then waxed poetic, as he declared [in Arabic verse]:

"Patience is bearable in all other contexts,
but with You it is unbearable."

Let us also consider the following sayings:

"Patience *[ṣabr]* means giving up complaining".

"It means humble submission *[istikāna]* and seeking refuge *[isti'ādha]* with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)."

"It means seeking help *[isti'āna]* from Allāh."

"The basic noun *ṣabr* [patience] means that no distinction is made between the state of grace *[ni'ma]* and the ordeal of tribulation *[miḥna]*, and that both are experienced with equanimity *[sukūn al-khāṭir]*. The derived form *taṣabbur* [trying to be patient] means calmness in coping with misfortune, although the feelings are affected by the burdens of the ordeal."

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[80] See note 36 on p. 116 above.

[81] See note 48 on p. 122 above.

5.
Concerning contentment *[riḍā]*.

As for contentment *[riḍā]*, the fundamental guidance on the subject is contained in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Allāh is well pleased with them,	*raḍiya 'llāhu 'an-hum*
and they are well pleased with Him.	*wa raḍū 'an-h.*
(58:22)	

—and in His words (Blessed and Exalted is He):

Their Lord gives them good tidings	*yubashshiru-hum Rabbu-hum*
of mercy from Him, and good pleasure,	*bi-raḥmatin min-hu wa riḍwānin*
and Gardens [of Paradise] in which	*wa jannātin la-hum*
they shall have lasting bliss. (9:21)	*fī-hā na'īmun muqīm.*

Furthermore, according to a traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās[82] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> The full flavor of true faith *[īmān]* is tasted by one who is content with Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) as a Lord *[Rabb]*.

[The Caliph] 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb once wrote to Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī[83] (may Allāh be well pleased with them both):

"The point I wish to emphasize is this: All goodness resides in contentment *[riḍā]*, so if you are capable of being content, [well and good]. If not, you must be patient *[fa-'ṣbir]*."

It was Qatāda[84] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said, in commenting on the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

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[82] See note 47 on p. 122 above.

[83] Abū Mūsā 'Abdu'llāh ibn Qais ibn Sulaimān al-Ash'arī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was a loyal Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He served as a general in many of the battles fought in the early days of Islām. In A.H. 37, he was appointed as an arbitrator to represent 'Alī (may Allāh ennoble his countenance) at the Battle of Ṣiffīn. He was also a distinguished scholar in the field of Qur'ānic studies. He died ca. A.H. 42.

[84] Abu'l-Khaṭṭāb Qatāda ibn Di'āma ibn Qatāda as-Sadūsī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was learned in Qur'ānic exegesis *[tafsīr]* and Islamic jurisprudence *[fiqh]*, as well as being an authority on Arabic poetry. He died in A.H. 118.

And if one of them receives tidings	*wa idhā bushshira aḥadu-hum*
of the birth of a female,	*bi'l-unthā*
his face remains darkened,	*ẓalla wajhu-hu muswaddan*
and he is inwardly furious. (16:58)	*wa huwa kaẓīm.*

—"This describes the attitude of those Arabs who attribute partners to Allāh [*mushriki 'l-'Arab*]. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has thus informed us of the badness of their attitude. As for the believer [*mu'min*], he is worthily disposed to be content with whatever Allāh (Exalted is He) has allotted to him."

The judgment of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) is better than a man's judgment on his own behalf. That which Allāh has decreed for you concerning something you dislike, O son of Adam, may be even better for you than that which Allāh has decreed for you concerning something you like. You must therefore observe your duty to Allāh (Exalted is He), and be content to accept His decision.

Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) has told us:

But it may happen that you hate	*wa 'asā an takrahū shai'an*
a thing that is good for you,	*wa huwa khairun la-kum:*
and it may happen that you love	*wa 'asā an tuḥibbū shai'an*
a thing which is bad for you.	*wa huwa sharrun la-kum:*
Allāh knows,	*wa 'llāhu ya'lamu*
and you know not. (2:216)	*wa antum lā ta'lamūn.*

That is to say, [He knows, and you do not know] what is in the best interest of your religion [*dīn*] and your worldly life, for Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has kept concealed from His creatures the things that are to their advantage. He has charged them with servitude [*'ubūdiyya*] to Him, by requiring fulfillment of the commandments and observance of the prohibitions [of the Sacred Law], submissive resignation to that which is foreordained [*maqdūr*], and contentment [*riḍā*] with the divine decree [*qaḍā'*] in every respect, whether it be in their favor or to their disadvantage. He has appropriated the consequences and the benefits unto Himself exclusively (Almighty and Glorious is He). It is therefore necessary for the servant to be constantly engaged in worshipful obedience to his Master [*Maulā*], to be content with whatever Allāh has allotted to him, and to harbor no doubts about Him.

As you should also be well aware, the amount of trouble experienced by any individual creature is in proportion to his quarrel with destiny *[qadar]* over that which is foreordained *[maqdūr]*, his compliance with his own desire *[hawā’]*, and his lack of contentment *[riḍā]* with the divine decree *[qaḍā’]*. Whenever someone is content to accept the divine decree, that person can enjoy rest and relaxation. Whenever someone is not content with it, on the other hand, his experience of misery and trouble can only be prolonged, and he will still obtain nothing from this world except that which has been allotted to him. As long as his personal desire persists in making its demands upon him, he cannot be content to accept the divine decree, because that desire is in contention with the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He), and so his troubles can only intensify and multiply.

The procurement of ease and comfort is the result of opposition to personal desire *[hawā’]*, because it is bound to involve contentment *[riḍā]* with the divine decree *[qaḍā’]*. The procurement of trouble and discomfort, on the other hand, is the result of compliance with personal desire, because it is bound to involve contention with the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He). So may desire not be there, and if it is, let us not be!

Should contentment *[riḍā]* be classed as one of the spiritual states *[aḥwāl]*, or as one of the spiritual stations *[maqāmāt]*? On this point there are differences of opinion among the qualified scholars and experts in the spiritual path *[ṭarīqa]*.

According to the people of ʿIrāq, it is one of the spiritual states *[aḥwāl]*. It is not subject, they maintain, to active acquisition *[kasb]* by the servant [of the Lord]. It is rather an occurrence or visitation *[nāzila]*, a condition that settles for a while within the inner feeling, like all the other spiritual states *[aḥwāl]*, then changes and passes away, as another state arrives to take its place.

According to the Khurāsānīs, on the other hand, contentment *[riḍā]* is one of the spiritual stations *[maqāmāt]*. They consider it to be the final stage of absolute trust in the Lord *[tawakkul]*, so that it represents the ultimate degree to which the servant [of the Lord] can attain through his own acquisitive capacity *[iktisāb]*.

It is possible to reconcile these two views, by stating the case as follows:

—"The favor conferred outwardly is the orderly arrangement of the physical constitution *[khalq]*, while the favor conferred inwardly is the purification of the moral character *[khuluq]*."

Someone asked Ibrāhīm ibn Ad'ham[64] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him): "Have you ever felt really happy in this world?" "Yes," he replied, "on two occasions. On the first occasion, as I was sitting at ease one day, a dog came along and urinated on me. On the second occasion, again while I was sitting at ease, a person came along and slapped me on the back of the neck."

It is said of Uwais al-Qaranī[65] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) that, whenever he caught sight of young boys throwing stones at him, he would say to them: "If you have nothing better to do, at least choose only little stones to throw at me, so that you will not make my leg bleed, and prevent me from performing the ritual prayer *[ṣalāt]*!"

It is said that a man kept heaping insults on Aḥnaf ibn Qais (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him), tagging along behind him as he did so. Finally, when he reached the outskirts of the village, Aḥnaf stopped in his tracks. "Young man," he said, "if you have anything else to get off your chest, you had better say it now, in case some of the local village idiots happen to hear you, and respond to you in kind!"

Someone asked Ḥātim al-Aṣamm ["the Deaf"]:[66] "Should a man maintain an attitude of tolerance toward every individual?" "Yes," he replied, "except toward himself."

According to a traditional report, the Commander of the Believers *[Amīr al-Mu'minīn]*, ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), once summoned a bondsman *[ghulām]*, but the young attendant failed to respond to his call. So he summoned him a second time, and a third, but still he did not respond. He then went to look for him, and

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[64] Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm ibn Ad'ham ibn Manṣūr ibn Yazīd ibn Jābir at-Tamīmī al-ʿIjlī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was born in Balkh of pure Arab descent. His life has often been compared to that of Buddha, since he is described in legend as the Prince of Balkh who renounced his kingdom and wandered westward to live a life of complete asceticism, earning his bread in Syria by honest manual labor until his death in ca. A.H. 165/782 C.E. According to some accounts, he was killed in the course of a naval expedition against Byzantium.

[65] See note 10 on p. 31 above.

[66] See note 42 on p. 119 above.

> He must first suffer the pain of affliction in his physical body, for that is the only means by which he can reach it.

According to one traditional account [*khabar*], when the words of Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He):

And he who does something wrong will have the recompense thereof. (4:123)	*wa man ya'mal sū'an yujza bi-hi.*

—were sent down, Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth [*aṣ-Ṣiddīq*] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), said: "O Messenger of Allāh, how can there be any hope of salvation [*falāḥ*], now that this Qur'ānic verse [*āya*] has been revealed?" So the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told him:

> Allāh has forgiven you, O Abū Bakr. Do you not get sick? Does painful affliction not befall you? Do you not endure with patience? Do you not experience grief and sorrow? Well, these are the things for which you will be recompensed.

That is to say: "Every affliction that befalls you will be an atonement [*kaffāra*] for your sins."

There are actually three kinds of patience [*ṣabr*], namely:

1. Patience for the sake of Allāh [*ṣabr li'llāh*] (Almighty and Glorious is He). This is the kind of patience [*ṣabr*] that is exercised in the course of carrying out His commandments and respectfully observing His prohibitions.

2. Patience in bearing with Allāh [*ṣabr ma'a 'llāh*] (Almighty and Glorious is He). This is the kind of patience [*ṣabr*] that is exercised while undergoing the effects of His decree and His actions within you, which cause you to experience all kinds of hardships and adversities.

3. Patience in anticipation of Allāh [*ṣabr 'ala 'llāh*] (Almighty and Glorious is He). This is the kind of patience [*ṣabr*] that is exercised while waiting for that which He has promised, in the way of sustenance, joyful relief, sufficiency, triumphant success, and reward in the abode of the Hereafter.

It has also been said that patience [*ṣabr*] can be divided into two types, namely:

1. Patience [*ṣabr*] exercised in situations where there is an active rôle [*kasb*] for the servant [of the Lord] to play.

2. Patience [*ṣabr*] exercised in situations where he has no active rôle [*kasb*] to play.

—in the presence of al-Junaid[88] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him), so al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) told him: "In saying that, you are prompted by a feeling of annoyance, and the feeling of annoyance is due to the lack of contentment *[riḍā]* with the divine decree *[qaḍā']*."

It was Abū Sulaimān [ad-Dārānī][89] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Contentment *[riḍā]* means that you do not ask Allāh to grant you the Garden of Paradise, and that you do not appeal to Him for refuge from the Fire of Hell."

Dhu 'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī [90] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) once said:

"These are three of the symptoms of contentment *[riḍā]*: (1) the lack of personal preference in advance of the divine decree *[qaḍā']*, (2) the absence of bitterness in the wake of the divine decree, and (3) the arousal of love in the midst of trial and tribulation."

He also said (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him):

"It is the happiness of the heart with the bitterness of the divine decree *[qaḍā']*."

When Abū 'Uthmān [al-Ḥīrī][91] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) was asked to explain the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> What I ask of you is contentment *[riḍā]* in the wake of the divine decree *[qaḍā']*.

—he said: "That is because contentment *[riḍā]* in advance of the divine decree *[qaḍā']* is only the prior determination to be content, while contentment *[riḍā]* in the wake of the divine decree *[qaḍā']* is the actual experience of contentment *[huwa 'r-riḍā]*."

As we learn from a traditional report, someone once told al-Ḥusain ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib[92] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) that Abū Dharr[93] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to say:

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[88] See note 38 on p. 118 above.

[89] Abū Sulaimān 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Aṭiyya ad-Dārānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a pious devotee whose inclination lay toward extreme asceticism. He is renowned for his many memorable sayings. He died in A.H. 205 or 215.

[90] See note 51 on p. 123 above.

[91] See note 71 on p. 135 above.

[92] Al-Ḥusain ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was the grandson of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

"Poverty is dearer to me than affluence, sickness is dearer to me than health, and death is dearer to me than life."

So he said: "May Allāh bestow His mercy upon Abū Dharr. As for myself, I say: 'When someone relies upon the excellence of Allāh's choice, he does not wish for anything other than that which Allāh has chosen for him.'"

[Abū 'Alī] al-Fuḍail ibn 'Iyāḍ[94] once said to Bishr al-Ḥāfī ["the Barefoot"][95] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon them both):

"Contentment *[riḍā]* is more meritorious than abstinence *[zuhd]* from this world, because when someone is content *[rāḍī]*, he does not wish for anything above his actual situation."

The view expressed by al-Fuḍail is the correct one, because it refers to contentment with one's actual condition *[ar-riḍā bi'l-ḥāl]*, and all that is good resides in contentment with one's actual condition. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) said to Moses *[Mūsā]* (peace be upon him):

"O Moses! I have	*yā Mūsā*
preferred you above mankind by My	*innī 'ṣṭafaitu-ka 'ala 'n-nāsi*
messages and by My speaking [to you].	*bi-risālātī wa bi-kalāmī*
So hold that which I have given you,	*fa-khudh mā ātaitu-ka*
and be among the thankful." (7:144)	*wa kun mina 'sh-shākirīn*

That is to say: "Be content with that which I have bestowed upon you. Do not go looking for another situation, and be among the thankful." In other words: "Be content with making the most of your actual condition *[ḥifẓ al-ḥāl]*."

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[93] Abū Dharr Jundab ibn Junādat al-Ghifārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was among the earliest to embrace Islām, and he came to be one of the most distinguished of all the Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). Noted for his humility and abstinence, he was so eager to acquire knowledge that he is said to have matched even Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) in religious learning. Together with Abu 'd-Dardā' and Abū 'Abdi'llāh Hudhaifa ibn al-Yamān al-'Absī (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), he was one of those Companions who were called *ṣāḥib sirr an-Nabī* because of the secret knowledge imparted to them by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He died in A.H. 31 or 32.

[94] Abū 'Alī al-Fuḍail ibn 'Iyāḍ at-Tālaqānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) died in Mecca in A.H. 187/803 C.E. Born in Khurāsān, he is said to have been a highwayman at the beginning of his career. After his conversion he went to Kūfa, where he studied under Sufyān ath-Thawrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) and achieved considerable repute as an authority on the Traditions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He is famous for his bold preaching before the Caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd, who called him "the Prince of the Muslims." It is said that when he died sorrow disappeared from the world.

[95] See note 50 on p. 123 above.

Likewise to our own Prophet Muhammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), He said (Exalted is He):

And strain not your eyes toward that	*wa lā tamuddanna 'aina-ka*
which We have given	*ilā mā matta'nā bi-hi*
for some pairs among them to enjoy—	*azwājan min-hum*
the flower of this world's life, that	*zahrata 'l-ḥayāti 'd-dunyā*
We may thereby put them to the test. (20:131)	*li-naftina-hum fī-h.*

As well as giving this instruction to His Prophet (blessing and peace be upon him), He also commanded him to make the most of his actual condition *[ḥifẓ al-ḥāl]*, and to be content with the divine decree and bestowal of provision *[ar-riḍā bi'l-qaḍā' wa 'l-'aṭā']*, in His words (Exalted is He):

And the provision of your Lord	*wa rizqu Rabbi-ka*
is better and more lasting. (20:131)	*khairun wa abqā.*

That is to say: "That which We have bestowed upon you—in the way of Prophethood *[Nubuwwa]*, knowledge *['ilm]*, satisfaction *[qanā'a]*, patience *[ṣabr]*, authority in religion *[wilāyat ad-dīn]* and the rôle of exemplar *[qudwa]* therein—is far superior to that which We have bestowed upon anyone other than you."

All goodness therefore resides in making the most of one's actual condition *[ḥifẓ al-ḥāl]*, in being content with it, and in refraining from taking an interest in any condition apart from it, because the only possibilities, as far as that [other condition] is concerned, are the following: (1) it is your own allotted portion *[qism]*, (2) it is the allotted portion *[qism]* of someone other than yourself, or (3) it is not a portion *[qism]* allotted to anyone, but something that Allāh (Exalted is He) has caused to exist as a temptation *[fitna]*.

If it is indeed your own allotted portion *[qism]*, it is bound to come your way, whether you wish for it or not. It is therefore inappropriate for you to exhibit bad manners and greediness in its pursuit, for that would be judged unworthy by the standard of reason *['aql]* and knowledge *['ilm]*.

If it is the allotted portion *[qism]* of someone other than yourself, you must not waste your time and energy on that which you cannot obtain, and which will never come your way.

—in the presence of al-Junaid[88] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him), so al-Junaid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) told him: "In saying that, you are prompted by a feeling of annoyance, and the feeling of annoyance is due to the lack of contentment *[riḍā]* with the divine decree *[qaḍā']*."

It was Abū Sulaimān [ad-Dārānī][89] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"Contentment *[riḍā]* means that you do not ask Allāh to grant you the Garden of Paradise, and that you do not appeal to Him for refuge from the Fire of Hell."

Dhu 'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī [90] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) once said:

"These are three of the symptoms of contentment *[riḍā]*: (1) the lack of personal preference in advance of the divine decree *[qaḍā']*, (2) the absence of bitterness in the wake of the divine decree, and (3) the arousal of love in the midst of trial and tribulation."

He also said (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him):

"It is the happiness of the heart with the bitterness of the divine decree *[qaḍā']*."

When Abū 'Uthmān [al-Ḥīrī][91] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) was asked to explain the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

> What I ask of you is contentment *[riḍā]* in the wake of the divine decree *[qaḍā']*.

—he said: "That is because contentment *[riḍā]* in advance of the divine decree *[qaḍā']* is only the prior determination to be content, while contentment *[riḍā]* in the wake of the divine decree *[qaḍā']* is the actual experience of contentment *[huwa 'r-riḍā]*."

As we learn from a traditional report, someone once told al-Ḥusain ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib[92] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with that their preoccupation with the benefaction *[ni'ma]*, instead of with the Benefactor *[Mun'im]*, amounts to a shortcoming. Their hearts are now preoccupied with the Benefactor *[Mun'im]*, instead of with the benefaction *[ni'ma]*, and so the affliction runs its course over them, while their hearts are unaffected by it.

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[88] See note 38 on p. 118 above.

[89] Abū Sulaimān 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Aṭiyya ad-Dārānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a pious devotee whose inclination lay toward extreme asceticism. He is renowned for his many memorable sayings. He died in A.H. 205 or 215.

[90] See note 51 on p. 123 above.

[91] See note 71 on p. 135 above.

[92] Al-Ḥusain ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was the grandson of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

"Once they have settled into this spiritual station *[maqām]*, and have made it their permanent residence, their Master *[Maulā]* will transport them to a level that is even loftier for them and more elevated than that, because there is no limit and no end to His gifts (Almighty and Glorious is He)."

At the very least, contentment *[riḍā]* must mean that one ceases to yearn for anything apart from Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), since Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has declared it blameworthy to yearn for anything other than Him (Almighty and Glorious is He).

Yaḥyā ibn Kathīr is reported as having said: "I read the Torah *[Taurāh]*, and in it I saw that Allāh (Glory be to Him and Exalted is He) says:

> 'Accursed is he whose reliance is placed upon a creature like himself.'"

In one of the traditions *[akhbār]*, it is reported that Allāh (Glory be to Him) says:

> By My Might, My Majesty, My Generosity and My Glory, I shall cut off with despair the hope of anyone who pins his hope on anything other than Me. I shall cause him to wear the garment of shame among the people. I shall banish him from My proximity, and I shall cut him off from access to Me. Will he go on pinning his hope, in the midst of adversities, on anything other than Me, when adversities are under My control, and I am the Ever-Living *[al-Ḥayy]*? Will he go on appealing to others apart from Me? Will he go on knocking with his mind at the doors of others apart from Me, when they are locked and their keys are in My hand?

In another tradition *[khabar]*, it is reported that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) says:

> Whenever a servant holds fast to Me, rather than to My creation, that fact becomes known from his heart and his intention *[niyya]*, so the heavens and the earth and all within them conspire to bring about his downfall, but I provide him with a means of escape therefrom. And whenever a servant clings to a created entity, rather than to Me, I cut away the cords of heaven from above him, and I turn the earth into a swamp beneath his feet. Then I bring him to ruination in this world, and I make him suffer misery therein.

A series of invocations, each of them beginning with: "In the Name of Allāh, who... *[Bismi'llāhi'lladhī...]*." [147]

Say: "In the Name of Allāh, who utterly transcends any attribution of counterparts *[addād]*. In the Name of Allāh, who is absolutely exempt from any attribution of partners or peers *[andād]*. In the Name of Allāh, who is far removed in His Holiness from the begetting of children *[awlād]*.

"In the Name of Allāh, who causes all lights to shine *[nawwara'l-anwār]*. In the Name of Allāh, who honors those who are righteous and fine *[abrār]*. In the Name of Allāh, who has predetermined all destinies *[aqdār]*, and who has enlightened human hearts and eyes *[abṣār]*. In the Name of Allāh, who manifests Himself to the hearts of the righteous *[abrār]* in those moments just before the break of day *[ashār]*.

"In the Name of Allāh, who allows dear friends to gain knowledge of the mysteries *[asrār]*, for He floods them with rays of light *[anwār]* and entrusts them with the keeping of those secrets *[asrār]*. From them He banishes all dangers *[akhṭār]*. He preserves them from being enslaved by jealous rivals *[aghyār]*, and He relieves them of all burdens, shackles, bonds *[āṣār]* and heavy loads *[awzār]*. For indeed, He has been characterized from all eternity by the attributes of beneficence, abundant grace, and readiness to forgive the sins of those who seek forgiveness *[ahl al-istighfār]*."

Say: "In the Name of Allāh, the Name of the One who causes the flowing of the rivers *[anhār]* and the sprouting of the trees *[ashjār]*."

[Say: "In the Name of Allāh," for that is] the Name of the One who brings prosperity to countries and towns by populating them with truly obedient folk from among His servants *['ibād]*. Such people serve as mainstays *[awtād]*, as mountain-like pillars of support, so that, for those

never be discontented. We are the women who are forever young, so we shall never grow senile and decrepit. We are the women who are always clothed, so we shall never go naked. We are the women who are good, the women who are beautiful, the wives of a truly noble people."

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[147] This subsection is also composed entirely in *saj'* (and, as readers will surely notice in due course, if they compare the transliterated Arabic words in brackets, so are all the remaining subsections in this Second Discourse).

As for the birds of the Garden of Paradise, each of them has seventy thousand feathers. Each of those feathers has a different color, quite unlike that of any other. The size of each bird amongst them is a mile in width by a mile in length. Whenever the true believer *[mu'min]* desires them to provide him with something to satisfy his appetite, he has only to fetch a bird and place it inside the bowl from which he intends to eat. The bird will then flap its wings and, as it rises, seventy kinds of food will fall from it into the bowl—such as cooked fare and all sorts of other tasty morsels. The flavor of this food is more delicious than honeydew, its tenderness is softer than butter, and its whiteness is whiter than buttermilk. As soon as he has eaten some of it, the bird will flap its wings again and fly away, without shedding a single feather in the process.

So that they can always enjoy this kind of service, their birds and their riding animals are carefully tended in the pastures of the Garden of Paradise surrounding their palatial mansions.

Allāh (Exalted is He) will give the people of the Garden of Paradise signet rings of gold for them to wear, these being the signet rings of eternal life. Then He will give them signet rings made of sapphire and pearls. That will be when they visit Him in the Abode of Peace *[Dār as-Salām]*.

When the people of the Garden of Paradise go to visit their Lord, they will eat and drink and thoroughly enjoy themselves.

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

The Lord of Might and Glory *[Rabb al-'Izza]* (Almighty and Majestic is He) will say: "O David, extol Me with your beautiful voice!" David will then extol Him for as long as Allāh (Exalted is He) wishes this celebration of His praise to continue, so that nothing in the Garden of Paradise will miss the opportunity to hear the beauty of his voice and its delightful sweetness. Then the Lord of Might and Glory (Almighty and Majestic is He) will present them with fine clothing and adornments. Then they will depart to rejoin their wives.

Every man among the people of the Garden of Paradise has access to the benefits provided by a tree called the Tree of Bliss *[Tūbā]*.[376] Whenever one of them wishes to dress himself up in clothes of extremely high quality, he has only to make his way to the Tree of Bliss *[Tūbā]*, the spathes or envelopes *[akmām]* of which will at once be opened up for him. These wardrobes are of six different kinds, each one of them containing seventy types of clothing. No article of clothing has the same color as any other, nor is any garment tailored from the same fabric as another. He may therefore take his pick, selecting whichever of these items he wishes to wear.

The following message is inscribed on the wives of the people of the Garden of Paradise—on the area between the throat and the breast of every woman amongst them: "You are my dearly beloved, and I am your dearly beloved *[anta*

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[376] See note 329 on p. 237 above.

6.
Concerning truthfulness *[ṣidq]*.

As for truthfulness *[ṣidq]*, the basic guidance on the subject is contained in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

O you who believe, be careful	*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna*
of your duty to Allāh,	*āmanu 'ttaqu 'llāha*
and be with the truthful. (9:119)	*wa kūnū ma'a 'ṣ-ṣādiqīn.*

—and in the traditional report, transmitted on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn Mas'ūd[97] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who stated that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

> When the servant [of the Lord] never ceases to tell the truth, and makes truthfulness *[ṣidq]* his constant pursuit, he is eventually recorded in the sight of Allāh as a champion of truth *[ṣiddīq]*. But when he never ceases to tell lies, and makes falsehood *[kadhib]* his constant pursuit, he is eventually recorded in the sight of Allāh as a professional liar *[kadhdhāb]*.

It is said that Allāh told David (peace be upon him), by way of inspiration:

> O David, if someone confirms the truth of My word *[ṣaddaqa-nī]* in the privacy of his conscience *[sirran]*, I will confirm the truth of his word *[ṣaddaqtu-hu]* in the opinion of the creatures in his public life.

You must know and understand that truthfulness *[ṣidq]* is the mainstay of the business *['imād al-amr]*, the means by which it is brought to completion *[tamām]*, and by which it is kept in good order *[niẓām]*. It ranks second only to Prophethood *[Nubuwwa]*, as we know from the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And whoever obeys Allāh	*wa man yuṭi'i 'llāha*
and the Messenger, they are in	*wa 'r-rasūla fa-ulā'ika*
the company of those	*ma'a 'lladhīna an'ama 'alai-him*
to whom Allāh has granted	*mina 'n-nabiyyīna*
gracious favor—the Prophets,	*wa 'ṣ-ṣiddīqīna wa 'sh-shuhadā'i*
the champions of truth, the martyrs	*wa 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn*
and the righteous—and the best	*wa ḥasuna ulā'ika*
of company are they!" (4:69)	*rafīqā.*

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[97] See note 30 on p. 114 above.

The word *ṣādiq* [truthful] is the simple adjective corresponding to the noun *ṣidq* [truthfulness], while the term *ṣiddīq* [champion of truth] is a more intensive form. The *ṣiddīq* is someone who makes such a constant practice of *ṣidq*, that it comes to be his regular habit and his natural disposition, and truthfulness *[ṣidq]* becomes the predominant aspect of his character.

Truthfulness *[ṣidq]* means that no distinction is made between what is believed in private and what is professed in public. The person who is simply truthful *[ṣādiq]* is therefore someone who tells the truth in his verbal statements *[ṣadaqa fī aqwāli-hi]*, while the champion of truth *[ṣiddīq]* is someone who tells the truth not only in his verbal statements, but also in all his actions and states of being *[ṣadaqa fī aqwāli-hi wa jamī'i af'āli-hi wa aḥwāli-hi]*.

In the words of one the wise:

"If anyone wishes for Allāh to be with him, he had better make truthfulness *[ṣidq]* his constant practice, for Allāh is with those who are truthful *[fa-inna 'llāha ma'a 'ṣ-ṣādiqīn]*."

It was al-Junaid[98] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"The truthful person *[ṣādiq]* experiences spiritual transformation *[yanqalibu]* forty times a day, while the hypocrite *[murā'ī]* remains stuck in one and the same state of being for forty years."

Let us also consider the following wise sayings:

"Truthfulness *[ṣidq]* means speaking the truth *[al-qawl bi'l-ḥaqq]*, even in situations of grave danger."

"Truthfulness *[ṣidq]* means ensuring the mutual consistency of private belief and public statement."

"Truthfulness *[ṣidq]* means keeping that which is unlawful *[ḥarām]* from lodging in the corner of one's mouth."

"Truthfulness *[ṣidq]* means putting one's loyal commitment to Allāh into active practice."

Sahl ibn 'Abdi'llāh [at-Tustarī][99] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) once said:

"The fragrant aroma of truthfulness *[ṣidq]* cannot be detected in the presence of someone who applies the oil of hypocritical flattery *[dāhin]* to himself or to other people."

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[98] See note 38 on p. 118 above.

[99] See note 32 on p. 116 above.

It was Abū Sa'īd al-Qurashī (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"The truthful person *[ṣādiq]* is someone who is fully prepared to die, and who would not be embarrassed by any secret of his, if it happened to be disclosed. Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Then long for death,	*fa-tamannawu 'l-mawta*
if you are truthful folk! (2:94)"[100]	*in kuntum ṣādiqīn*

These sayings also deserve to be quoted:

"Truthfulness *[ṣidq]* means genuineness in the affirmation of Divine Unity *[ṣiḥḥat at-tauḥīd]*, together with the sense of purpose *[qaṣd]*."

"The real meaning of truthfulness *[ḥaqīqat aṣ-ṣidq]* is that you would always tell the truth, even in a situation of deadly peril, from which nothing but lying could save you."

"Three things are never lacking in the truthful person *[ṣādiq]*, namely: (1) graceful charm *[ḥalāwa]*, (2) dignity *[haiba]*, and (3) a lively sense of humor *[malāḥa]*."

Dhu 'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī[101] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) once said:

"Truthfulness *[ṣidq]* is the sword of Allāh; it cuts through anything upon which it is brought to bear."

It was Sahl ibn 'Abdi'llāh [at-Tustarī][102] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

"The principal offense of the champions of truth *[ṣiddīqīn]* is the one they commit by conversing only with their fellows."[103]

Fath al-Mawṣilī (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) was once asked to explain the meaning of truthfulness *[ṣidq]*. By way of response, he stuck his hand into the blacksmith's brazier, pulled out a piece of iron, which was being heated in the fire, and placed it on the palm of his hand until it cooled. "This," he said, "is truthfulness *[ṣidq]*."

When someone asked al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī[104] (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) to describe the distinguishing mark of truthfulness *[ṣidq]*, he said:

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[100] These words of Allāh (Exalted is He) occur inQ. 2:94 and 62:6.

[101] See note 51 on p. 123 above.

[102] See note 32 on p. 116 above.

[103] This saying calls to mind the English idiom: "preaching to the converted."

[104] See note 50 on p. 123 above.

"The truthful person *[ṣādiq]* is someone who would not mind, because of the goodness of his own heart, if every one of his faculties moved out into the hearts of his fellow creatures. He does not like other people to notice all the minute details of his good work, but he does not object to their noticing what he does badly. If he did object to that, it would indicate that he would like them to regard him with excessive admiration, and this is not in keeping with the moral standards of the champions of truth *[akhlāq aṣ-ṣiddīqīn]*."

One of the wise once said: "If someone does not perform the permanent religious duty *[al-farḍ ad-dā'im]*, his performance of the temporary religious duty *[al-farḍ al-mu'aqqat]* will not be accepted of him." When asked to explain what he meant by the permanent religious duty, he said: "Truthfulness *[ṣidq]*."

Let us give the last word to the wise man who said:

"If you seek Allāh by means of truthfulness *[ṣidq]*, He will give you a looking glass, a mirror in which you will see every detail of the marvels and wonders of this world and the Hereafter."

* * * * * * *

This brings us to the end of
Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth
[al-Ghunya li-Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Haqq]

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn].

Concerning the Author, Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī

A Brief Introduction by the Translator[1]

The Author's Names and Titles

A rich store of information about the author of *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth* is conveniently available, to those familiar with the religious and spiritual tradition of Islām, in his names, his surnames, and the many titles conferred upon him by his devoted followers. It is not unusual for these to take up several lines in an Arabic manuscript, but let us start with the short form of the author's name as it appears on the cover and title page of this book: *Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī*.

Shaikh: A term applied throughout the Islamic world to respected persons of recognized seniority in learning, experience and wisdom. Its basic meaning in Arabic is "an elder; a man over fifty years of age." (The spellings *Sheikh* and *Shaykh* may also be encountered in English-language publications.)

ʿAbd al-Qādir: This is the author's personal name, meaning "Servant [or Slave] of the All-Powerful." (The form *ʿAbdul Qādir*, which the reader may come across elsewhere, is simply an alternative transliteration of the Arabic spelling.) It has always been a common practice, in the Muslim community, to give a male child a name in which *ʿAbd* is prefixed to one of the Names of Allāh.

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[1] Reproduced for the convenience of the reader, with slight modifications from the version printed on pp. xiii-xix of: Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir. *Revelations of the Unseen (Futūh al-Ghaib)*. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Houston, Texas: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 1992.

al-Jīlānī: A surname ending in *-ī* will often indicate the bearer's place of birth. Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir was born in the Iranian district of Gīlān, south of the Caspian Sea, in A.H. 470/1077-8 C.E. (In some texts, the Persian spelling *Gīlānī* is used instead of the arabicized form al-Jīlānī. The abbreviated form *al-Jīlī*, which may also be encountered, should not be confused with the surname of the venerable 'Abd al-Karīm al-Jīlī, author of the celebrated work al-Insān al-Kāmil, who came from Jīl in the district of Baghdād.)

Let us now consider a slightly longer version of the Shaikh's name, as it occurs near the beginning of *Al-Fath ar-Rabbānī [The Sublime Revelation]*: *Sayyidunā 'sh-Shaikh Muḥyi'd-Dīn Abū Muhammad 'Abd al-Qādir (Raḍiya'llāhu 'anh)*.

Sayyidunā 'sh-Shaikh: "Our Master, the Shaikh." A writer who regards himself as a Qādirī, a devoted follower of Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir, will generally refer to the latter as *Sayyidunā* [our Master], or *Sayyidī* [my Master].

Muḥyi'd-Dīn: "Reviver of the Religion." It is widely acknowledged by historians, non-Muslim as well as Muslim, that Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir displayed great courage in reaffirming the traditional teachings of Islām, in an era when sectarianism was rife, and when materialistic and rationalistic tendencies were predominant in all sections of society. In matters of Islamic jurisprudence *[fiqh]* and theology *[kalām]*, he adhered quite strictly to the highly "orthodox" school of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal.

Abū Muhammad: "Father of Muhammad." In the Arabic system of nomenclature, a man's surnames usually include the name of his first-born son, with the prefix *Abū* [Father of—].

Raḍiya'llāhu 'anh: "May Allāh be well pleased with him!" This benediction is the one customarily pronounced—and spelled out in writing—after mentioning the name of a Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). The preference for this particular invocation is yet another mark of the extraordinary status held by Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir in the eyes of his devoted followers.

Finally, we must note some important elements contained within this even longer version: *al-Ghauth al-A‘ẓam Sulṭān al-Awliyā’ Sayyidunā ’sh-Shaikh Muhyi’d-Dīn ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī al-Ḥasanī al-Ḥusainī (Raḍiya’llāhu ‘anh).*

al-Ghauth al-A‘ẓam: "The Supreme Helper" (or, "The Mightiest Succor"). *Ghauth* is an Arabic word meaning: (1) A cry for aid or succor. (2) Aid, help, succor; deliverance from adversity. (3) The chief of the Saints, who is empowered by Allāh to bring succor to suffering humanity, in response to His creatures' cry for help in times of extreme adversity.

Sulṭān al-Awliyā’: "The Sultan of the Saints." This reinforces the preceding title, emphasizing the supremacy of the *Ghauth* above all other orders of sanctity.

al-Ḥasanī al-Ḥusainī: "The descendant of both al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusain, the grandsons of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)." To quote the Turkish author, Shaikh Muzaffer Ozak Efendi (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): "The lineage of Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir is known as the Chain of Gold, since both his parents were descendants of the Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). His noble father, ‘Abdullāh, traced his descent by way of Imām Ḥasan, while his revered mother, Umm al-Khair, traced hers through Imām Ḥusain."

As for the many other surnames, titles and honorific appellations that have been conferred upon Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, it may suffice at this point to mention *al-Bāz al-Ashhab* [The Gray Falcon].

The Author's Life in Baghdād

Through the mists of legend surrounding the life of Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, it is possible to discern the outlines of the following biographical sketch:

In A.H. 488, at the age of eighteen, he left his native province to become a student in the great capital city of Baghdād, the hub of political, commercial and cultural activity, and the center of religious learning in the world of Islām. After studying traditional sciences under such teachers as the prominent Ḥanbalī jurist *[faqīh]*, Abū Sa'd 'Alī al-Mukharrimī, he encountered a more spiritually oriented instructor in the saintly person of Abu'l-Khair Ḥammād ad-Dabbās. Then, instead of embarking on his own professorial career, he abandoned the city and spent twenty-five years as a wanderer in the desert regions of 'Irāq.

He was over fifty years old by the time he returned to Baghdād, in A.H. 521/1127 C.E., and began to preach in public. His hearers were profoundly affected by the style and content of his lectures, and his reputation grew and spread through all sections of society. He moved into the school *[madrasa]* belonging to his old teacher al-Mukharrimī, but the premises eventually proved inadequate. In A.H. 528, pious donations were applied to the construction of a residence and guesthouse *[ribāṭ]*, capable of housing the Shaikh and his large family, as well as providing accommodation for his pupils and space for those who came from far and wide to attend his regular sessions *[majālis]*.

He lived to a ripe old age, and continued his work until his very last breath, as we know from the accounts of his final moments recorded in the Addendum to Revelations of the Unseen.

In the words of Shaikh Muzaffer Ozak Efendi: "The venerable 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī passed on to the Realm of Divine Beauty in A.H. 561/1166 C.E., and his blessed mausoleum in Baghdād is still a place of pious visitation. He is noted for his extraordinary spiritual experiences and exploits, as well as his memorable sayings and wise teachings. It is rightly said of him that 'he was born in love, grew in perfection, and met his Lord in the perfection of love.' May the All-Glorious Lord bring us in contact with his lofty spiritual influence!"

The Author's Literary Works

Al-*Fatḥ ar-Rabbānī* [The Sublime Revelation]. A collection of sixty-two discourses delivered by Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir in the years A.H. 545-546/1150-1152 C.E. Arabic text published by Dār al-Albāb, Damascus,

—two hundred and fifty times, for that will add up to a grand total of one thousand verses *[alf āya]*.

It is important for him not to omit the recitation, throughout the entire course of the night, of four particular Sūras, namely: (1) the Sūra that begins with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Alif, Lām, Mīm.	*Alif–Lām–Mīm.*
The revelation of the Book,	*tanzīlu 'l-Kitābi*
of which there is no doubt,	*lā raiba fī-hi*
is from the Lord of All the Worlds.	*min Rabbi 'l-ʿālamīn*

—that is to say, the Sūra of Prostration *[Sūrat as-Sajda]*,[77] (2) the Sūra entitled *Yā-Sīn*,[78] (3) the Sūra that begins with the words of Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He):

Ḥā-Mīm.	*Ḥā-Mīm:*
By the Book that makes plain;	*wa 'l-Kitābi 'l-mubīni*
We sent it down	*innā anzalnā-hu*
on a blessed night.... (44:1-3)	*fī lailatin mubārakatin.*

—that is to say, the Sūra of Smoke *[Sūrat ad-Dukhān]*,[79] and (4) the Sūra that begins with His words (Exalted is He):

Blessed is He in whose Hand	*tabāraka 'lladhī*
is the Sovereignty.	*bi-yadi-hi 'l-mulk.*

—that is to say, the Sūra of Sovereignty *[Sūrat al-Mulk]*.[80]

He will do better still if he also recites, together with these four, the Sūra of the Enshrouded One *[Sūrat al-Muzzammil]*[81] and the Sūra of the Event *[Sūrat al-Wāqiʿa]*.[82]

It is said that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would never go off to sleep until he had recited the Sūra of Prostration *[Sūrat as-Sajda]*[83] and the Sūra that begins with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Blessed is He in whose Hand	*tabāraka 'lladhī*
is the Sovereignty.	*bi-yadi-hi 'l-mulk.*

[77] The Sūra of Prostration *[Sūrat as-Sajda]* is the 32nd Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[78] The Sūra entitled Yā–Sīn is the 36th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[79] The Sūra of Smoke *[Sūrat ad-Dukhān]* is the 44th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[80] See n. 75 on p. 69 above.

[81] The Sūra of the Enshrouded One *[Sūrat al-Muzzammil]* is the 73rd Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[82] The Sūra of the Event *[Sūrat al-Wāqiʿa]* is the 56th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

[83] See n. 77 above.

***Sirr al-Asrār* [The Secret of Secrets].** A short work, divided into twenty-four chapters, in which "the realities within our faith and our path are divulged." English translation: *The Secret of Secrets by Ḥadrat 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī*, interpreted by Shaykh Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi al-Halveti. Cambridge, England: The Islamic Texts Society, 1992.

***Al-Ghunya li-tālibī tarīq al-haqq* [Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth].** Arabic text published in two parts by Dār al-Albāb, Damascus, n.d., 192 pp. + 200 pp. Translated from the Arabic (in 5 vols.) by Muhtar Holland. Hollywood, Florida: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 1997.

Other works attributed to Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir include short treatises on some of the Divine Names; litanies *[awrād/aḥzāb]*; prayers and supplications *[da'awāt/munājāt]*; mystical poems *[qaṣā'id]*.

May Allāh forgive our mistakes and failings, and may He bestow His blessings upon all connected with our project—especially our gracious readers! Āmīn.

Muhtar Holland

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About the Translator

Muhtar Holland was born in 1935, in the ancient city of Durham in the North East of England. This statement may be considered anachronistic, however, since he did not bear the name Muhtar until 1969, when he was moved—by powerful experiences in the *latihan kejiwaan* of Subud—to embrace the religion of Islām.*

At the age of four, according to an entry in his father's diary, he said to a man who asked his name: "I'm a stranger to myself." During his years at school, he was drawn most strongly to the study of languages, which seemed to offer signposts to guide the stranger on his "Journey Home," apart from their practical usefulness to one who loved to spend his vacations traveling—at first on a bicycle—through foreign lands. Serious courses in Latin, Greek, French, Spanish and Danish, with additional smatterings of Anglo-Saxon, Italian, German and Dutch. Travels in France, Germany, Belgium, Holland and Denmark. Then a State Scholarship and up to Balliol College, Oxford, for a degree course centered on the study of Arabic and Turkish. Travels in Turkey and Syria. Then National Service in the Royal Navy, with most of the two years spent on an intensive course in the Russian language.

In the years since graduation from Oxford and Her Majesty's Senior Service, Mr. Holland has held academic posts at the University of Toronto, Canada; at the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London, England (with a five-month leave to study Islamic Law in Cairo, Egypt); and at the Universiti Kebangsaan in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (followed by a six-month sojourn in Indonesia). He also worked as Senior Research Fellow at the Islamic Foundation in Leicester, England, and as Director of the Nūr al-Islām Translation Center in Valley Cottage, New York.

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* The name Muhtar was received at that time from Bapak Muhammad Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo, of Wisma Subud, Jakarta, in response to a request for a suitable Muslim name. In strict academic transliteration from the Arabic, the spelling would be *Mukhtār*. The form *Muchtar* is probably more common in Indonesia than *Muhtar*, which happens to coincide with the modern Turkish spelling of the name.

His freelance activities have mostly been devoted to writing and translating in various parts of the world, including Scotland and California. He made his Pilgrimage *[Ḥajj]* to Mecca in 1980.

Published works include the following:

Al-Ghazālī. *On the Duties of Brotherhood*. Translated from the Classical Arabic by Muhtar Holland. London: Latimer New Dimensions, 1975. New York: Overlook Press, 1977. Repr. 1980 and 1993.

Sheikh Muzaffer Ozak al-Jerrahi. *The Unveiling of Love*. Translated from the Turkish by Muhtar Holland. New York: Inner Traditions, 1981. Westport, Ct.: Pir Publications, 1990.

Ibn Taymīya. *Public Duties in Islām*. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Leicester, England: Islamic Foundation, 1982.

Hasan Shushud. *Masters of Wisdom of Central Asia*. Translated from the Turkish by Muhtar Holland. Ellingstring, England: Coombe Springs Press, 1983.

Al-Ghazālī. *Inner Dimensions of Islamic Worship*. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Leicester, England: Islamic Foundation, 1983.

Sheikh Muzaffer Ozak al-Jerrahi. *Irshād*. Translated [from the Turkish] with an Introduction by Muhtar Holland. Warwick, New York: Amity House, 1988. Westport, Ct.: Pir Publications, 1990.

Sheikh Muzaffer Ozak al-Jerrahi. *Blessed Virgin Mary*. Translation from the Original Turkish by Muhtar Holland. Westport, Ct.: Pir Publications, 1991.

Sheikh Muzaffer Ozak al-Jerrahi. *The Garden of Dervishes*. Translation from the Original Turkish by Muhtar Holland. Westport, Ct.: Pir Publications, 1991.

Sheikh Muzaffer Ozak al-Jerrahi. *Adornment of Hearts*. Translation from the Original Turkish by Muhtar Holland and Sixtina Friedrich. Westport, Ct.: Pir Publications, 1991.

Sheikh Muzaffer Ozak al-Jerrahi. *Ashki's Divan*. Translation from the Original Turkish by Muhtar Holland and Sixtina Friedrich. Westport, Ct.: Pir Publications, 1991.

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